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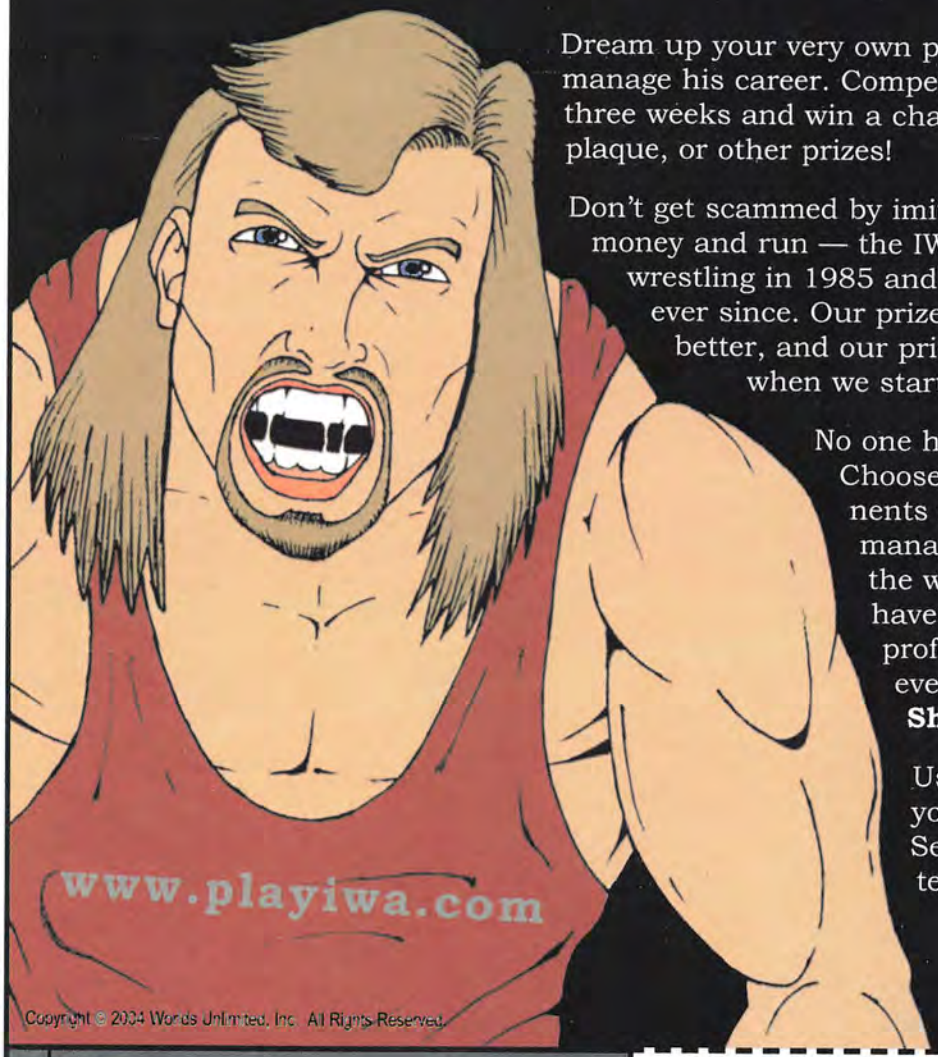

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WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. Airplane spin
2. Arm drag
3. Arm lock
4. Asian spike
5. Atomic drop
6. Bear hug
7. Bite
8. Body slam
9. Body tackle
10. Bulldog
11. Chicken wing
12. Choke slam
13. Claw
14. Clothesline
15. Cross body block
16. Double axehandle
17. Drop kick
18. Eagle split
19. Elbow smash
20. Eye gouge
21. Face rake
22. Fireman's carry ram
23. Flying body press
24. Flying clothesline
25. Flying drop kick
26. Flying elbow drop
27. Flying head butt
28. Flying mare
29. Forearm smash
30. Foreign object
31. Full nelson
32. Giant swing
33. Grapevine
34. Hair pull
35. Hammer lock
36. Head lock
37. Head stomp
38. Hip roll
39. Irish whip
40. Knee drop
41. Leg lock
42. Leg sweep
43. Manager interference
44. Monkey flip
45. Overhead toss
46. Pole ram
47. Reverse chin lock
48. Rolling scissors
49. Rope burn
50. Russian sickle
51. Savate kick
52. Scissors grip
53. Shoulder breaker
54. Slingshot
55. Snap mare
56. Step-over toe hold
57. Suplex
58. Surfboard
59. Turnbuckle smash
60. Wrist lock

SET-UP HOLDS

61. Abdominal stretch
62. Avalanche
63. Backbreaker
64. Backroll press
65. Belly to belly
66. Big splash
67. Boston crab
68. Brain buster
69. Camel clutch
70. Cobra clutch
71. Cradle
72. Crucifix
73. DDT
74. Figure four
75. Flying leg drop
76. Gourd buster
77. Hurricanrana
78. Moonsault
79. Neckbreaker
80. Piledriver
81. Power bomb
82. Power slam
83. Scorpion deathlock
84. Sleeper
85. Slingshot suplex
86. Spine buster
87. Stunner
88. Sunset flip
89. Superplex
90. Texas cloverleaf

YOUR NAME (PRINT NEATLY)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

WRESTLER'S NAME (DO NOT USE ANY REAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES)

WEAR-DOWN HOLDS: *Choose 10 of the holds at the left numbered 1-60. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____

SET-UP HOLDS: *Choose 5 of the holds at the left numbered 61-90. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

FINISHING HOLD: *Create your own custom final maneuver or choose a hold from our list.*

FROM THE DESK OF...

YEARS AGO, I took my young nephew to an indoor soccer match at the Nassau Coliseum on Long Island. I don't remember anything about the game, but I vividly recall one thing about the experience: When the hometown team scored a goal, the sound the audience made was unlike anything I had ever heard at a sporting event. Expecting a roar, I heard, well, a very screechy *meow*. This was not an audience of lions; it was comprised mainly of kittens. We'll call them kids in the name of accuracy.

I had a flashback moment to that soccer match when I attended a live WWE show at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia the afternoon of Super Bowl Sunday. As I was setting up my camera near the ring, I noted how many young kids were in attendance. But it wasn't until John Cena's music came over the P.A. system for the opening match that it really hit home. I heard that high-pitched *meow* again.

This is what WWE's TV-PG philosophy has wrought.

The question of whether WWE would be better off with the TV-14 rating it carried until 2009 is a major point of contention on the Internet and (when WWE officers are out of earshot) in WWE locker rooms as well. During a recent *Raw* promo, John Cena, feigning sarcasm, alluded to the fact that he was doing his best at talking trash within the confines of the PG rating. On page 46 of this issue, you'll see that 140 of the 200 subscribers we canvassed in our annual "*PWI* Poll" believed the TV-PG strategy is a bad thing.

I disagree.

I don't necessarily believe that WWE should cater to squeaky 10-year-olds, but I think the current approach is a win-win situation for the company. Ask yourself this question: What creative freedom has WWE given up in the name of so-called family entertainment? The action is as intense and nearly violent as ever. Does it really enhance your entertainment experience to see men's faces covered with blood? The women are every bit as gorgeous as they ever were. Do you really need to see them wearing even skimpier outfits? If you need to see naked women, something tells me you know where to find them. The storylines are either well-written or they aren't. That has more to do with the creative minds of the writers than anything else. The current philosophy should challenge those creative minds to build ratings and audiences through effective storytelling, rather than finding new ways to push the envelope of decency.

There were those who were of the impression that WWE's reclassification to PG was all about Linda McMahon's U.S. Senate run. Their hope was that as soon as the election was over, WWE would come to its senses and go back to its old ways. The fact that WWE did not do as they had hoped is a pretty good indication that the company was not thinking of the short-term benefit of going PG, but rather had taken a long-range view of the company's future.

It's pretty well-known in wrestling circles that Donna Goldsmith, who was hired away from the NBA by WWE in 2000, was a strong force behind the shift to PG. Goldsmith rose to the level of chief operating officer before resigning from the company at the end of February. Again, fans in opposition to WWE's PG philosophy were given a ray of hope that Goldsmith's departure would mark a return to WWE's former philosophy.

They're going to be disappointed. For a variety of reasons—none of which have anything to do with Vince McMahon suddenly becoming a moral man—WWE is going to stay the course. If you don't like it, I urge you to tune to Spike TV on Thursday nights.

And don't stop loving WWE because young kids happen to like it as well. That would be like cutting your forehead to spite your face.

Stu Saks
Publisher

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Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

JUNE 2011

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George Napolitano

COVER DESIGN:
Samantha Weyant

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BEFORE THE BELL

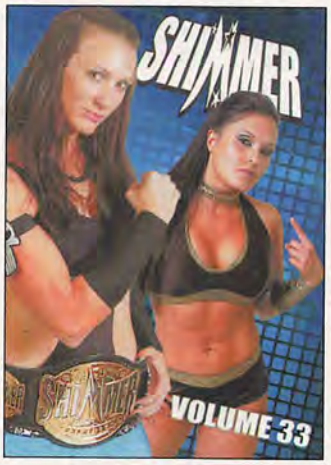
COMPILED BY MIKE BESSLER

SHIMMER WOMEN ATHLETES, VOLUMES 32 & 33

IN THE SHORT space of a half-decade, SHIMMER has developed into a thriving mecca for lady grapplers, hosting an intriguing combination of fresh, aspiring rookies and seasoned wrestlers. While some of the promotion's more famous alumni, such as WWE's "Glamazon" Beth Phoenix and reigning TNA Knockouts champion Madison Rayne, have moved on to ostensibly greener (as in money) pastures, the roster of wrestlers appearing on *SHIMMER Volume 32* and *Volume 33* is a "who's who" of the industry's top independent female talent.

Filmed before a packed hall of enthusiastic fans at SHIMMER's home venue, the Berwyn Eagle's Club, in Berwyn, Illinois, both shows feature action-packed cards and intriguing feuds.

SHIMMER Volume 32 (recorded April 2010) not only boasts a remarkable array of established SHIMMER performers, but also includes an infusion of Japanese talent, including Ayako Hamada, Ayumi Kurihara, Hiroyo Matsumoto, Misaki Ohata, and Tomoka Nakagawa.



Volume 32 chronicles what appears to be the definitive breakup of "Scream Queens" Daffney and MsChif in an ear-splitting spectacle of verbal and physical brutality. Daizee Haze, a trainer for SHIMMER behind the scenes, makes an impressive showing in her meeting with Kurihara. The outcome of their contest—a countout win for Haze—is, in fact, so controversial that a rematch follows on *Volume 33*.

SHIMMER matriarch Allison Danger joins forces with Jennifer Blake in tag team action and "Dark Angel" Sarah Storm (alter-ego of TNA's Sarita), Portia Perez, Rachel Summerlyn, and Nevaeh all wrestle noteworthy singles bouts.

The main event for *Volume 32* pits Cheerleader Melissa against Ayako Hamada in a number-one contender's match for the SHIMMER championship. Laden with impressive maneuvers and near-falls, this hard-fought battle offers entertainment every bit as compelling as anything you'll see on a TNA or WWE pay-per-view.

SHIMMER Volume 33 (taped September 2010) keeps the action rolling with undercard singles action from performers including up-and-comer Jamilia Craft and SHIMMER vet Cat Power. Serena Deeb's triumphant return to SHIMMER is a high point for *Volume 33*, as the moment captures the tightly knit sense of community that exists between the promotion and its fans.

The real power of *Volume 33*, though, lies in the Haze-Kurihara rematch. Both women pack every iota of their resolve and ability into this bout, and while it's not the main event of *Volume 33*, these ladies compete as though they're doing battle for the SHIMMER title itself. In the end, Kurihara avenges her previous loss to Haze.

The SHIMMER championship, however, is up for contention on *Volume 33*, as reigning champ Madison Eagles fends off a challenge from number-one contender Cheerleader Melissa, who vows throughout the DVD to go home with the title. The meeting between these two female gladiators is both hotly anticipated and hotly contested, culminating in a battle that would garner the respect of any wrestling aficionado. Ultimately, Eagles emerges with her championship intact.

As an organization that builds its following through direct marketing of DVD sales, SHIMMER has created a product of exceptional quality. *Volumes 32* and *33* are a resounding expression of the promotion's dedication to the presentation of compelling, high-quality women's wrestling.

The overall spirit of the promotion, which emphasizes substance over style, coupled with the consistent drive to let the SHIMMER women work and earn the respect of fans, wins these volumes four out of five suplexes.

TALKIN' TRASH

Here's a list of the top 10 wrestling-related items you've been talking about lately and our gut reaction to each:

Photo by George Napolitano

10. Awesome Kong signs with WWE. Sure the other Divas should be worried. But the indomitable Kong can be defeated, as Taylor Wilde proved twice in TNA.

9. WWE continues to cast Vickie Guerrero as an overbearing and conniving prima donna. Given her wrestling lineage, her abilities on the mike, and her consistent work as a polarizing and compelling performer, it's surprising that the best WWE can come up with for Vickie—week in and week out—are a bunch of tired, old "fat" jokes leveled at her expense.

8. Appearing at a celebrity charity event, WWE champion The Miz loses a video game tournament to UFC's Rampage Jackson. All things considered, this still sounds more entertaining than one million episodes of *NXT*.

7. Beer Money Inc. captures the TNA tag belts from The Motor City Machine Guns. If there is any lingering doubt as to which company leads the industry in tag team wrestling, this feud should set the record straight once and for all.

6. Ring of Honor loses its weekly television show on HDNet. It's a tough loss for ROH, but down the road, a better deal on a more prominent network would mean big things for the promotion. Hopefully, ROH's best days still lie ahead.

5. Wade Barrett jumps to Smackdown and assembles a powerful new faction that includes two of his former Nexus cronies and the ever-intimidating Ezekiel Jackson. If this mess of brawn and attitude can't nail down some championship gold, then maybe Barrett should try to land a reality show for the lot of them. They'd probably give *Dog The Bounty Hunter* a run for its money, bra.

4. Matt Hardy signs with TNA. This might be the first time ever that a crappy, late-night cell phone video of a guy's incoherent antics with his brother actually helped him get a new job.

3. WWE names Shawn Michaels to its list of 2011 Hall of Fame inductees. There's no doubt that he's one of the best in-ring performers of all-time, but it's also a safe bet that his induction speech will be among the most emotional and memorable oratorical performances in the history of the business.

2. CM Punk takes control of The Nexus on *Monday Night Raw*. So it's a second go-'round at portraying a power-hungry cult leader. It's not that typecasting is necessarily a bad thing; just ask Gilligan, The Skipper, Mary Ann, Ginger ...

1. Mr. Anderson wins the TNA championship from Jeff Hardy at Genesis. After a series of disappointing hiccups in his climb up the ladder, it seems as if this is finally Anderson's time to shine.

WE HEARD THAT!

"People get hurt. If it's bad enough, usually, if you need to have surgery, you're off. If it's something you can work through, you usually just grit your teeth, tape it up real tight, and try to go, because the show must go on."

—Ted DiBiase Jr., talking with valley24.com regarding the inherent risks of the sport

"As a female wrestler you are marketed to be cute, sexy, have a banging body, and be full of life. You're not so cute when you are 30, 35, 40. And that's not a shot at older women ... But as far as television goes, and what your body can take, our biological clocks are ticking. For most of us women, we are marketed on our appearance, and that has a much shorter shelf life than any man in this industry."

—Former TNA Knockouts champion Taylor Wilde on her decision to retire from wrestling in an interview with *The Sun* (U.K.)

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

"When they called me to bring me back, John Laurinaitis, the head of talent relations, was adamant that I try to keep as many of my independent bookings as I could. That kind of took me by surprise. It was really cool because I owe a lot to my independent fans and the promoters who booked me."

—Daniel Bryan to Jon Waldman of Slam! Sports on his release and subsequent return to WWE

"Basically, I won the triple crown. I won all three titles in a matter of one year, which is incredible. Not too many people can say they've done that. I'm actually one of those people who can say I have and it's pretty incredible. It's like a dream come true."

—The Miz explaining his rise to the top of WWE to fanhouse.com

GIMMICK MATCHES WE'D LIKE TO SEE

Sometimes it takes a unique and special kind of match to liven up a big-time wrestling event. Ladder matches, extreme rules, and three-way dances are gimmicks that may add a bit of panache to an otherwise stale card, but we have a few more suggestions for some unorthodox and entertaining bouts.

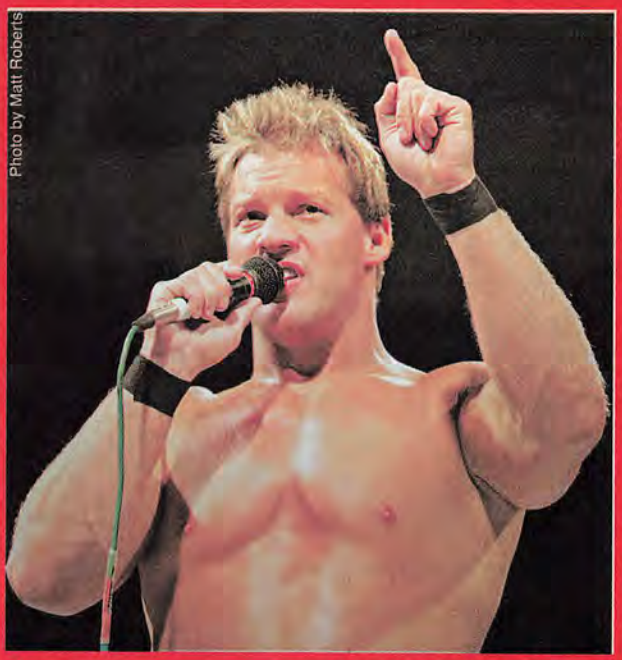


Photo by Matt Roberts

Raw *Guest Host Alumni Battle Royal.* As the sun sets on the guest-host era of *Monday Night Raw*, some of the celebs that survived the high-profile awkwardness deserve one more shot at wrestling immortality. Why not round them up and let them duke it out in an over-the-top-rope brawl? The smart money in this fight is on the dainty, but durable, Florence Henderson.

Loser Buys the Pay-Per-View match. The rules here are pretty straightforward: The losing wrestler of a pay-per-view main event foots the bill for each and every viewer that coughed up money to watch the show. For TNA events, Eric Bischoff pays double the money if the match ends in a confusing non-finish or double-DQ.

McMahon Family Festivus match. Vince gathers his entire family together to perform feats of strength while he screams at them about how they've disappointed him over the years. The first McMahon to pin Daddy Mac gets to take home the big aluminum pole. Special guest referee: George Costanza.

What Just Happened? match. Ultimate Warrior takes on The Iron Sheik in a battle to cut the most bizarrely nonsensical shoot promo of all-time. The winner gets a starring role in the movie *Yelling Insults At Random People*, a forthcoming direct-to-video release from WWE Films.

Michael Cole Lederhosen Death match. Combatants are tied together with a pair of Cole's infamous lederhosen. The first wrestler to free himself and force his competitor to fully don the garments and perform the Chicken Dance is declared the "Kaiser Of Professional Wrestling."

Chris Jericho Literacy Challenge. Competitors are given unabridged dictionaries and quizzed on Chris Jericho's favorite stilted terms, such as "axiomatic" and "sycophant." Wrestlers can choose to look up the words or simply use the dictionaries to beat one another into submission.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: TEAM 3-D ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING

Many folks maintain that experience is the best teacher. If this old adage rings true, then aspiring wrestlers would do well to take a close look at Team 3-D Academy of Professional Wrestling.

Established in 2007, Team 3-D Academy holds the distinction of being founded by two of the most decorated athletes in the history of tag team wrestling, Brother (Bully) Ray and Brother Devon.

Located in Kissimmee, Florida, the school has garnered the interest and attention of hungry young grapplers far and wide. "They come from all over the world—New Zealand, Scotland, Ireland, Russia—to train here," beams Team 3-D Academy trainer Dan Carr, a longtime boxing trainer and creator of *American Gladiators.* He draws upon decades of work experience in athletics and entertainment to mold his pupils into the competitive in-ring talent of the future. "We train smarter, not harder," he explains. "If they come here in good shape, we put them in great shape."

Following Carr's rigorous regimen of core work and strength training, Team 3-D students advance through the program, learning the fundamentals of wrestling directly from Brother Devon. "I'm there every night, teaching basic moves and chain wrestling to the new guys, and from there, they'll move on to Brother Ray, who teaches in-ring psychology and storytelling. This is hard work and we don't advance people through the program until we feel they're ready."

With interest and enrollment in Team 3-D Academy on the rise, some of the school's alumni are reaping the benefits of the former Dudleys' hands-on education in this real-life school of hard

knocks. According to Brother Ray, seven wrestlers who have completed training at the school are now signed to major promotions, including TNA's Jesse Neal and Rob Terry. Indeed, Team 3-D's relationship with TNA appears likely to move into a more formal partnership in the near future, as both parties consider making the Academy the promotion's official developmental program.

Brother Ray is confident the program offered at Team 3-D Academy harkens a bold new standard in professional wrestling training. "When you see a Team 3-D student in the ring, you'll see an athlete who knows how to wrestle and how to conduct himself inside the ring and in front of a camera. He will represent the caliber and quality of training at Team 3-D Academy."

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

The likelihood of success for any trainee, explains Brother Ray, is ultimately measured by his or her level of determination and commitment. "We teach people who want to make pro wrestling their career," he said. "This is their new life."

For more information on Team 3-D Academy of Professional Wrestling, visit their website, www.team3dacademy.com.

CAPTION ME!

Think you're a better writer than the editors at *PWI?* Here's your chance to prove it, punk! This shot of Jeff Jarrett psyching up for his MMA "exhibition" with Kurt Angle at Genesis deserves a concise and downright uproarious caption. If you think you are up to the challenge, e-mail your zany quips to prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com, or slap a stamp on an envelope and snail-mail it to "Caption Me!," Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Three issues from now, we'll share with you the best of the bunch—and the funnier the better!

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

MARCH'S BEST

Eat your heart out, Melina!
—Darren Oliver, darrenoparis@aol.com

Insert Vickie Guerrero joke here.
—Denise Carter, denisecarter@xplornet.com

Martin Levy demonstrates an early forerunner to Booker T's "spinarooni."
—Chuck Bates, St. Augustine, FL

... And that was the last anyone saw of Sky Low Low for a long time.
—Todd Burlington, Mt. Laurel, NJ

Just to make sure the crew assembled the ring properly, the promoter put it through the most vigorous test he could think of.
—Patty Kelly, San Francisco, CA

RINGSIDE

WITH BILL MELTZER

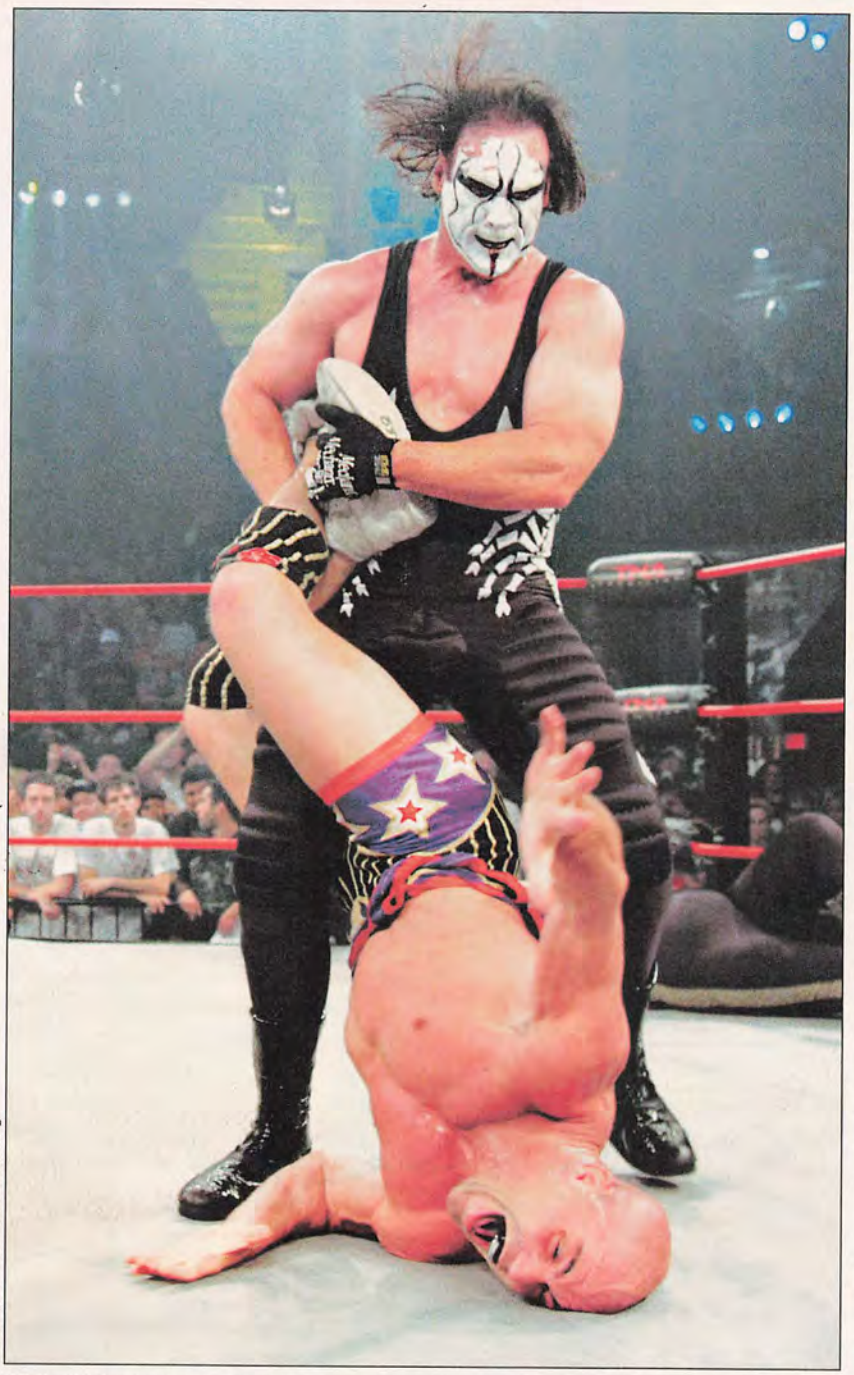


Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

While WWE denies it, rumors persist that Sting will soon be coming north to work for Vince McMahon.

RUMORS CONTINUE TO swirl that 52-year-old former WCW and TNA superstar **Sting** will soon make his WWE debut continue, despite a flat-out denial from WWE officials.

As soon as Sting's name was taken off the roster on TNA's official website in January, reports surfaced that he was close to finalizing a deal in Stamford, Connecticut.

The New York *Daily News* reported that a one-year contract had been signed, but as of press time for this issue, WWE officials are saying that not only has the federation not signed him, but, in fact, the two sides have never even been in negotiations. Other sources suggest that Sting has been in talks to return to TNA.

TNA President **Dixie Carter** said that she was well aware of reports of Sting jumping to WWE and would be "disappointed" if it came to fruition. She reiterated that he is welcome to stay in TNA and said that she'd asked TNA Creative to have storylines ready for the legend's return.

In the meantime, much to the relief of WWE officials, the long-delayed returns to the ring of a pair of its veteran superstars finally got back on track after numerous setbacks.

After a few false starts, **The Undertaker** finally began to recover strength in his surgically repaired shoulder through intensive physical rehabilitation. After sustaining a torn rotator cuff, 'Taker had trouble lifting his arm above a certain height but has once again recovered his full range of motion. His wonky hip, which has also gone under the knife in recent years, has also benefited from his extended time away from the ring.

Triple-H's return from surgery to repair a torn biceps progressed slowly at first, but sessions with personal trainer **Joe DeFranco** and a change in his workout routine have finally yielded positive results.

Photo by George Napolitano

The look on his face as he attacks Wade Barrett indicates that the fire still burns inside Kevin Nash, but the 51-year-old "Diesel" will be happy to make only occasional ring appearances while serving other roles for WWE.

Speaking of aging and ailing stars, WWE does not plan to use the returning **Kevin Nash** and **Booker T** as regular in-ring performers, despite their appearance as participants at the Royal Rumble. Nash has been signed to a legends contract, which will entail periodic ring appearances, television promos, and public appearances.

In a recent interview with the Milwaukee affiliate of ESPN Radio, Nash said that's fine by him and acknowledged that his battered body simply can't take anything close to a full-time schedule anymore. Booker has not ruled out taking on a slate of matches, but for now will concentrate on color commentary duties on *Smackdown* and being a coach on the newly revived *Tough Enough* reality show, which will be hosted by **"Stone-Cold" Steve Austin**. The show is slated to begin airing in the spring.

Ric Flair is back on good terms with TNA management after smoothing over their differences. The disagreement stemmed from the company denying the "Nature Boy's" request to be paid upfront for the company's recent European tour and from a dispute over back pay. The issues have since been resolved. However, Flair may be out of commission for a while after suffering a strained (not torn) rotator cuff in a match in London with **Doug Williams**.

Kurt Angle received permission from TNA management to leave the European tour in order to tend to his pregnant fiancée after it was learned that she had passed out due to a drastic increase in her blood pressure, causing labor to be induced. The bad news: Angle returned home too late to witness the birth of the couple's daughter. The good news: Both mother and child are doing well.

The early peer reviews on **Matt Hardy's** performances since joining brother **Jeff Hardy** in TNA have been positive. Contrary to his image as a locker room malcontent, TNA wrestlers have said that Hardy is cooperative and easy to work with. While TNA officials have recommended that Hardy focus on losing weight and working on his all-around conditioning over the next year, the relationship seems to be working out well so far.

Matt will have to be in shape—or find a new tag team partner to give him a breather. Jeff reclaimed the TNA World title by beating Mr. Anderson in a thrilling ladder match at Against All Odds.

WWE reportedly has expressed interest in signing **Ryan Nemeth** (the real-life brother of WWE star **Dolph Ziggler**) to a developmental deal in Florida Championship Wrestling and perhaps an eventual reunion or feud with his sibling if he makes it to the big roster. In the meantime, Nemeth recently captured Ohio Valley Wrestling's

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Though they've clashed in the ring several times over their careers, The Big Show has been very vocal about Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson's potential WWE Hall of Fame induction.

vacant Southern tag team title with his partner **Paredyse**. That same night, OVW heavyweight champion **Cliff "Domino" Compton** successfully defended his title against former WWE performer **Mike Mondo**.

In addition to being one of the most popular wrestlers of the past quarter-century, **Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson** has also been one of the most polarizing figures within the business. One prominent wrestler who has nothing but praise for The Rock is **The Big Show**. Speaking recently to *The Miami Herald*, Show called on WWE to make Johnson its headline inductee into the class of 2012.

"You have to look at the impact The Rock had on our industry from the short time he has been in the business to the megastar he is today. I think if anyone deserves to be in the Hall of Fame, I'm sure The Rock does," said Show. "Plus, Dwayne Johnson is one of the finest and nicest people I've met in my life. There are a lot of guys that you meet in this business. There are people you don't like and people you do like. I have incredible respect for Dwayne and his entire family. I respect the man and the character he has. He's awesome."

Shaul Guerrero, the daughter of **Vickie** and **Eddie Guerrero**, has been earning positive reviews for her work in FCW. Following in her mother's footsteps, she has perfected Vickie's "Excuse me!" entry line to interrupt promos and ring introductions. Despite this nod to her family ties, Shaul has been using the ring name **Raquel Diaz**.

WWE Hall of Famer and former World champion **The Iron Sheik** has become increasingly incapacitated physically in recent years due to accumulated effects of his in-ring injuries. Recently, he underwent knee replacement surgery in an effort to get some relief from his chronic ailments and to eventually regain a degree of mobility.

The wrestling community is mourning the recent passings of 1960s and 1970s regional star **Nick "The Greek" Spillios**, early-TV-era performer **Johnny Heidemann**, colorful Samoan wrestler **Tiki Tapu**, former WWE developmental wrestler **Shawn Osborne**, and **Val Puccio**. Our sincere condolences go out to their friends and families.

Spillios, who passed away at age 79 after a long bout with cancer, was a tremendous natural athlete in his youth, graduating from the University of Houston on a track scholarship while also competing in wrestling (he later became a high school coach). From the mid-1960s to early-1970s, he was a well-regarded mid-card performer and sometimes semi-main-eventer in **Paul Boesch's** promotion as well as others throughout Texas and in Mexico.

Heidemann, 90, got his start late in wrestling's carnival era, making his debut in 1938 and remaining active through the sport's early-television boom. He finally

Photo by George Napolitano

Now that he's regained full range of motion in his injured shoulder, The Undertaker should have little trouble hoisting Rey Mysterio Jr.—or any other wrestler—into position for a chokeslam.

Photo Courtesy of Scott Teal

A former member of the Executioner and Inferno tag teams, Johnny Heidemann passed away at age 90.

retired in 1973. One of the first North American wrestlers to tour Japan after World War II, he made a couple of return trips over the remainder of his career. In the U.S., he wrestled under his own name and also under a mask as a member of one of the countless incarnations of **The Executioners** and **The Infernos**.

Tapu, like Spillios, succumbed to cancer. A protégé of **Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka** who also teamed with other Polynesian wrestlers, he received his training from **Joe Taylor**, with Snuka, **Wahoo McDaniel,** and **Abdullah the Butcher** also lending support as he broke into the business. A precursor to some of the Samoan super heavyweights who attained greater national fame, the American Samoa native had the ability to drop a diving headbutt off the top rope despite carrying more than 300 pounds on his frame.

Osborne, 34, had moderate success in WWE developmental territories Ohio Valley Wrestling and Florida Championship Wrestling from 2006 to 2008 and was well-regarded on the independent circuit. He had become despondent in his personal life and, tragically, committed suicide.

Puccio, 45, died as a result of complications from morbid obesity. In the prime of his career, he wrestled as a member of the **Full Blooded Italians (FBI)** in **Paul Heyman's** ECW. Previously, while wrestling in **Joe Savoldi's** IWA, Puccio and older brother Tony donned masks as **The Undertakers**, adopting personas somewhat similar to the one WWE would soon expand upon to find enduring success with their own singles-wrestling version of **The Undertaker**. Puccio's lifelong weight problems eventually caused him to balloon to over 600 pounds and hastened the end of his career. His story was examined in a 2007 television documentary on The Learning Channel. The former wrestler sought treatment at the Brookhaven Obesity Clinic, but was unable to conquer his problem. □

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QUICK COUNT

BY AL CASTLE

FOR WRESTLING FANS, "March Madness" may best describe the mood heading into WrestleMania. But there is another sport that reaches its climax this time of year—college basketball. With that in mind, please enjoy this "Big Dance"-themed edition of "Quick Counts," a *PWI* Division 1-A column.

BLUE DEVILS

Airing in an earlier time slot than *Raw* and featuring such colorful characters as Rey Mysterio Jr. and The Undertaker, *Smackdown* has traditionally been thought of as the more kid-friendly of WWE's two main television shows.

As such, it's quite peculiar to see how dark WWE's blue brand has become in recent months. From the monstrous Kane to Wade Barrett's new stable, The Corre, to the smarmy Alberto Del Rio to the vain Cody Rhodes, *Smackdown* seems to be overflowing with evildoers, and lacking in honorable heroes to stand up against them.

The Undertaker is far from a full-time act these days. Mysterio has clearly settled into a mid-card role. And the brand's number-one babyface, Edge, is hardly the picture of virtue.

The time is right for somebody—anybody—to stand up for what's right on the Smackdown brand, even if he'd be grossly outnumbered in doing so.

FLORIDA GATOR

From Tommy Lasorda to Jimmy Johnson, pro sports' halls of fame have their fair share of inductees who made their names not as great athletes, but as great leaders of other athletes. WWE may have such a person on its payroll, although most fans would not recognize him.

For four years now, Steve Keirn has headed

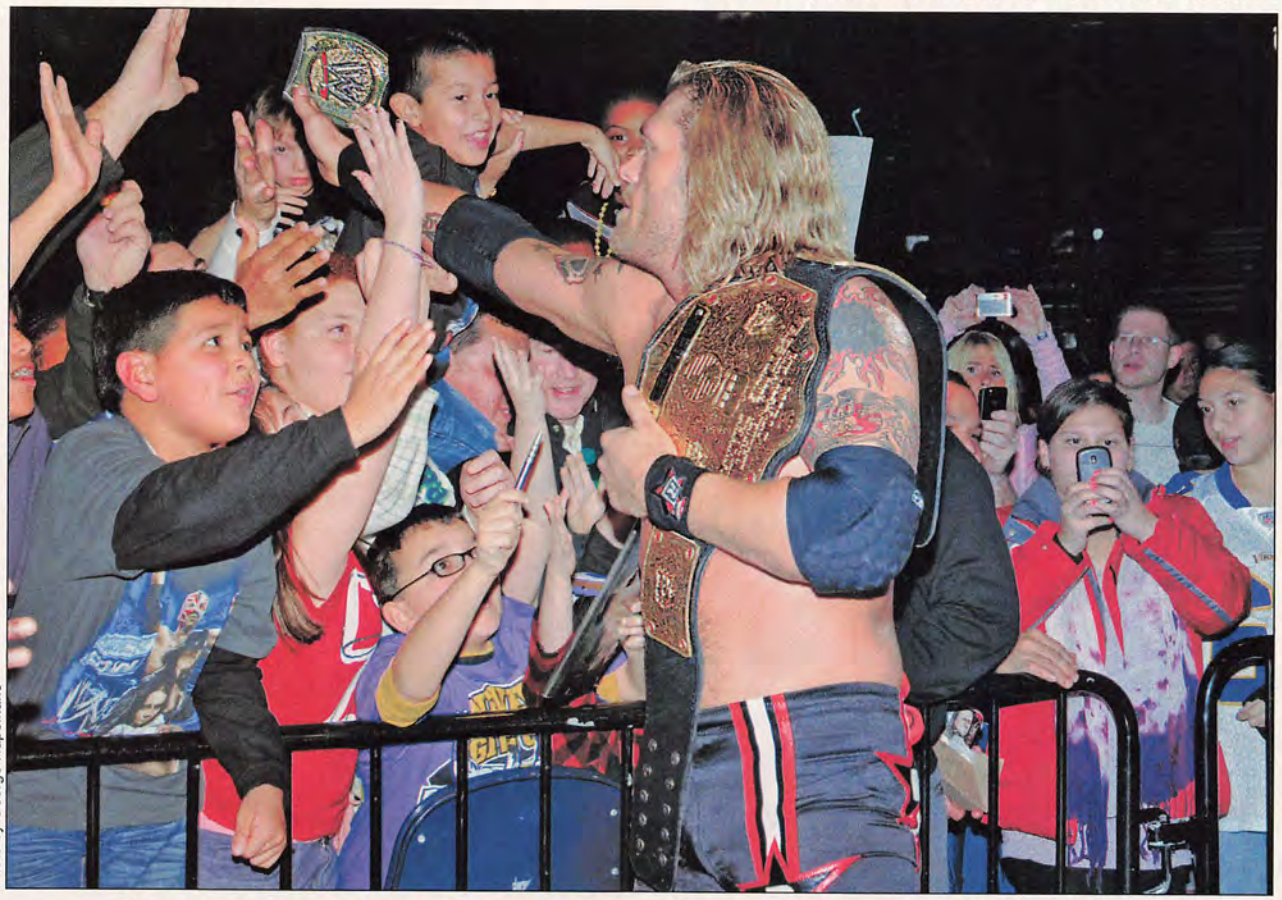


Photo by George Napolitano

Although he may be popular with young fans, Edge is no paragon of virtue, says Al Castle, who feels Smackdown is in sore need of a genuine good guy that will stand up to all the villains on its roster.

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Robbie E may not be as orange as Triple-H sometimes is, but neither he nor Cookie are strangers to a fake tan. Castle finds the tanning trend among wrestlers to be out of control ... and downright funny.

WWE's developmental system, Florida Championship Wrestling. Along the way, Keirn has had a hand in molding the careers of dozens of current WWE stars, including two men who would go on to be world champions—Jack Swagger and Sheamus.

Keirn's knack for developing WWE stars follows a somewhat inconspicuous in-ring career that, by itself, would not be considered Hall-of-Fame-worthy. As one-half of The Fabulous Ones with Stan Lane, Keirn had a respectable tag team career in the 1980s, followed by a fairly forgettable stint in WWE as the gator-hunting Skinner.

But perhaps Keirn's less-than-spectacular years taught him just the right lessons to pass along to a new generation of wrestlers: humility, perseverance, and the ability to make the most of the persona you're given.

HUSKIES

Although he's on the mend after taking a punt to the head from Randy Orton, The Nexus' Husky Harris—perhaps more than any of his teammates—may have just the right tools to make it far in the wrestling business: toughness, originality, and genetics.

In an era when most of WWE's new recruits seem pulled from an underwear model photo shoot, the burly Harris harkens back to a time when wrestlers' success was judged not by how many posters they could sell, but byhow much butt they could kick.

It's no surprise that Harris would focus on fundamentals rather than flash. His father, Mike Rotundo, was never the most charismatic competitor, but carved out a solid career based on his wrestling acumen. His grandpa, WWE Hall of Famer Blackjack Mulligan, was about as far removed from "pretty boy" as they come, but became one of the sport's biggest draws through his bravado and toughness.

Fans should not underestimate "The Tank With A Ferrari Engine" ... and neither should Orton.

TERRAPINS

From Rob Terry to Ezekiel Jackson to Jackson Andrews to Mason Ryan to Crimson, both TNA and WWE seem to have gotten back into the "big man" business in a major way. And while all those men may turn heads when they walk through an airport, they may also cause some fans to turn the channel when they enter the ring.

Time and again, it's been proven that adding too much musculature to your frame significantly limits your ability and speed in the ring. And so while big men may look great standing in the ring, they sometimes look terrible moving around it at a turtle's pace.

It took years for mid-sized wrestlers like Shawn Michaels and Chris Jericho to dispel the myth that wrestlers had to be at least 6'6" and well over 250 pounds to become superstars. Thanks to the athleticism and excitement shown by such mid-sized competitors—not only in wrestling but in boxing and mixed martial arts—the sport reached a time when a 5'9", 220-pound workhorse had the same chance to make it in this sport as someone much bigger than him. It would be a shame to take such a *giant* step backward.

ORANGE MEN

On the biggest night of the year in the sport, it's no surprise to see wrestlers don brand new ring gear for their WrestleMania matches. But it's not only in their tights that wrestlers look for a burst of color.

The tanning craze pioneered by Hulk Hogan two decades ago has reached new and absurd heights among wrestlers, who these days sport shades of skin color that would make a dermatologist weep.

The biggest culprit, no doubt, is Triple-H, whose melanin levels seem to be in direct correlation to the magnitude of the event in which he's wrestling. For a *Monday Night Raw*, he looks something like Winnie the Pooh. For WrestleMania: Garfield the cat.

If there's some solace in wrestling's bronzing obsession, it's that more wrestlers appear to be going the way of spray-on tanner, rather than potentially dangerous tanning beds. But those orange stains on the mat sure are tough to get out. □

KREW-CUTS

BY FRANK KREWDA

Unintended consequences. On second thought, I'm not so sure WWE's recent youth movement, by which the likes of The Miz, Sheamus, John Morrison, and Dolph Ziggler were elevated to main-event status, was such a positive development for WWE after all.

Certainly, it was a necessary and effective Band-Aid for the sudden loss of star power following the departures of Shawn Michaels, Batista, and Chris Jericho, as well as the injuries to The Undertaker and Triple-H. And yes, WWE, like all wrestling promotions, should never stop building for the future. However, the sudden ascension of so many new faces all at once could bring some unintended consequences.

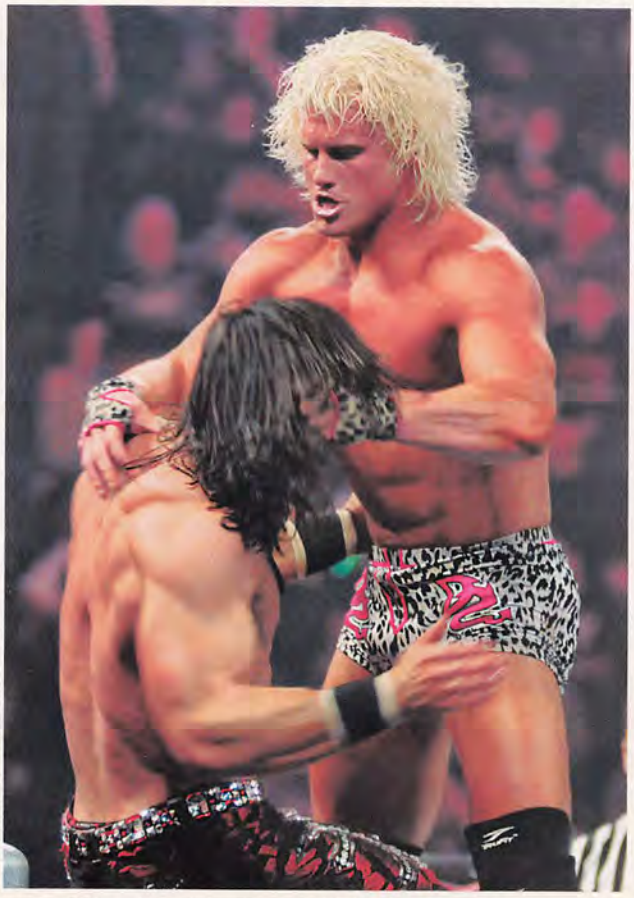


Photo by George Napolitano

While WWE should hardly be criticized for elevating wrestlers such as Dolph Ziggler and John Morrison in recent times, pushing so many young stars at the same time could interfere with WWE's ability to create wrestling's "next big thing," says Frank Krewda.

While we were taking in a recent indy card, Contributing Writer Brady Hicks asked me who my pick for the number-one spot in the "*PWI* 500" would be if I had to choose right now, six months ahead of the conclusion of the evaluation period. When I thought about who really stood out among WWE wrestlers in 2010 and into 2011, I realized that because so many different younger wrestlers were given an opportunity to run at the front of the WWE pack this past year, nobody had really stood out among them.

If somebody held a gun to my head, which, thankfully, Brady did not, I suppose I'd give Miz the nod because he did hold every title available on Raw at one time or another in the past year. But overall, parity reigned in WWE for most of 2010. And while parity might work well for the NFL, it isn't necessarily a good thing for professional wrestling.

Thinking beyond the immediate crisis of selecting a number-one for the "*PWI* 500," the broader question in my mind is, *How is WWE going to create wrestling's "next big thing"—a wrestler/personality on the order of The Rock or Steve Austin—if so many are given an equal chance to shine?*

Sure, John Cena is WWE's front man right now—and he does a fine job in that role—but even he, with all due respect to his merchandising prowess, can't touch The Rock or "Stone-Cold" in terms of overall popularity or the ability to carry the company to new heights.

Call it an oversimplification on my part, but spreading opportunity around to so many wrestlers, rather than concentrating efforts on building that one larger-than-life megastar, just seems counterproductive.

Conventional wisdom. Two fresh faces that didn't ascend—and actually descended as 2010 gave way to 2011—were those of Jack Swagger and Ted DiBiase Jr.

In fairness to WWE, neither man was blessed with an abundance of charisma or promo skills, but, considering the hype with which these "blue chippers" entered the company, WWE must be disappointed to some degree in its inability to get either man over in a meaningful way.

Obviously, as a former ECW and World champion, Swagger has fared somewhat better than DiBiase. However, the fact that Swagger achieved such heights at the beginning of 2010 only to close out the year as lower-card, opening-match *Smackdown* fodder only makes his descent that much more pronounced, disappointing, and curious. Maybe typecasting Swagger as a big-mouthed bully for so

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

TNA's roster is full of wrestlers like Jeff Jarrett and Kurt Angle, whose pure wrestling ability should be enough to capture fans' attention. Krewda feels *Impact* would do well by putting more emphasis on wrestling.

many months before saddling him with a ridiculous mascot might have made him a tough sell to fans. Then there was that high-profile Money in the Bank win at WrestleMania 26 that was offset the very next night on *Raw* when Swagger challenged then-WWE champion John Cena ... only to back down and rescind the challenge when Cena came down to the ring fully prepared to do battle.

DiBiase went from being a lackey to a somewhat legitimate challenger to Randy Orton's WWE title to somebody who has struggled to maintain regular appearances on *Raw*. Even having the smoking-hot Maryse on his arm has failed to keep the third-generation wrestler on TV consistently. As of press time, DiBiase, to put it bluntly, had become an afterthought.

Conventional wisdom says a rising tide lifts all ships, but in this case, it seems DiBiase and Swagger may be unable to tread water long enough to benefit from WWE's youth movement the way some of their peers have. Conventional wisdom also says nobody creates wrestling stars like Vince McMahon, but the disappointing realities of Swagger's and DiBiase's careers demonstrate that even Vince fails sometimes.

TNA wrestling? For all its faults and failures, nobody can accuse TNA of not trying to improve. If anything, some might consider TNA guilty of trying to do too much to goose its weekly ratings.

I, however, feel TNA is guilty of simply overlooking a very basic element of modern professional wrestling—professional wrestling.

Enough gimmick matches, convoluted stipulations, factions, lockboxes, suspended Xs, domed cages, and high-priced, big-name WWE cast-offs. Maybe, just maybe, more fans would react more positively, and in larger numbers, if TNA showcased more ... *wait for it* ... wrestling.

With a roster that boasts Kurt Angle, Rob Van Dam, AJ Styles, Jeff Jarrett, and Jeff Hardy, I think TNA's mandate is clear: Let these men *wrestle* ... and stay the hell out of their way!

I won't go as far as my colleague Harry Burkett might and blame Vince Russo for all of TNA's (and wrestling's) woes. Clearly, to captivate fans, modern professional wrestling requires more than an athletic exchange on the mat between two men, and naturally, somebody has to write the material that comes before, during, and after. But Russo, or whoever has to create content and draft storylines, should try to do it in a much less intrusive manner.

TNA has the personnel on hand to showcase compelling bouts from the dark match to the main event each and every week on *Impact* and to make wrestling the focal point of the show. Why TNA hasn't tried this approach in years is beyond me. Heaven knows, they've tried everything else.

I'm not calling for Gotch-Hackenschmidt here, just for TNA to let the in-ring action and occasional promo tell whatever stories need to be told. □

CHASING THE DREAM: KAZARIAN

BY GERRY STRAUSS

The dedicated men and women who choose to pursue a career in professional wrestling rarely start anywhere near the top. Often, their roads are long, hard, and just plain weird. "Chasing The Dream" features an established wrestler who will reveal his or her long, strange path to stardom. Brace yourself: It's going to be a bumpy ride.

Photos by Mike Lano

Kazarian understands that there are few guarantees in this business. After experiencing the national spotlight, he found himself again in the indies in 2005, competing in Pro Wrestling Guerrilla against Scott Lost and filling time before being called for TV promos (inset).

EVERY YOUNG ATHLETE has someone from whom he or she received early inspiration. Usually, it's someone within the sport in which they participate. But not always.

A California native, Frank Kazarian can thank Sylvester Stallone for his lifelong fixation with the sport of kings ... indirectly, of course.

"I became a fan after watching WrestleMania I. I was a fan of *Rocky III* and I saw Hulk Hogan on the poster, so I thought that was probably cool. From then on, I was hooked."

The man eventually billed as "The Future" would carry his passion for wrestling through his formative years, finishing his education as he prepared to take his life in a bold, new direction. After graduating from high school in 1998, it was time to pursue his dream. But where?

"I researched every wrestling school in the free world," Kazarian recalled. "After receiving advice from Bret Hart, I decided to go to Killer Kowalski's wrestling school in Massachusetts. I worked several jobs and saved money for a few years before I was able to attend."

The legendary Kowalski's reputation preceded him. The man behind the training of Triple-H and countless other stars, Kowalski certainly made his mark on Kazarian's life.

"Killer Kowalski was one of my dearest friends," Kazarian said. "I'll always be grateful for the impact he had on my life."

Under Kowalski's tutelage, Kazarian's patience was a virtue, but he didn't need to wait very long to get his first taste of in-ring action.

"My first match was in Gardner, Massachusetts," Kazarian recounted. "After a month of training, I went to a show to set up the ring and helped out. A fellow wrestler's car broke down and they needed someone to fill the slot. With 15 minutes notice and a month of training under my belt, out I went to wrestle Freight Train Dan."

For several years, Kazarian toiled on the undercard of local independent events, gain-

ing valuable experience while growing accustomed to life on the road. However, his career didn't truly catch fire until he hooked up with future friend and tag partner in 2001, ECW's Mike "Nova" Bucci, later known to WWE fans as wannabe fitness guru Simon Dean.

"When I first started teaming with Nova, I got a lot of exposure on the indy scene, especially in the Northeast," Kazarian said. "Also, when I began wrestling for [California-based] UPW, they were getting a lot of national attention ... so that helped. Then, on a tour of Europe, I met a lot of people from TNA and that got the ball rolling there."

A fixture in TNA since 2003, Kazarian helped define the early days of the exciting X division, even competing in the first Ultimate X match with Michael Shane and Chris Sabin. A short-lived stint in the WWE followed, but destiny brought him back to TNA, the X division, and former TNA Knockout Traci Brooks, whom he married last year.

At press time, Kazarian reigned supreme as X division champion, a title he has held on four different occasions. Intermingling on television each week with the likes of Hulk Hogan and "Nature Boy" Ric Flair, he has cemented himself as one of wrestling's top talents. For California's own Frankie Kazarian, it's been a long ride, but it's definitely been worth the trip. □

MOST MEMORABLE ROAD TRIP: "I did a week tour of Beirut, Lebanon, in which guns were pointed, buildings were bombed, and planes almost crashed ... a pretty horrible experience."

WEIRDEST INDEPENDENT EVENT THAT YOU APPEARED ON: "I think all indies are weird! It could have been when I saw two men wrestle and the winner had to take the belt off of an alligator. Or it could have been the time the guys from the church stole our money and ran."

WORST WRESTLING INJURY: "When I tore my triceps in 2008, and then tore my bicep two months later, which kept me out for eight months."

STRANGEST PROMOTER: "I'm not sure I want to touch that one! But I think that all of us that partake in wrestling are strange in our own way."

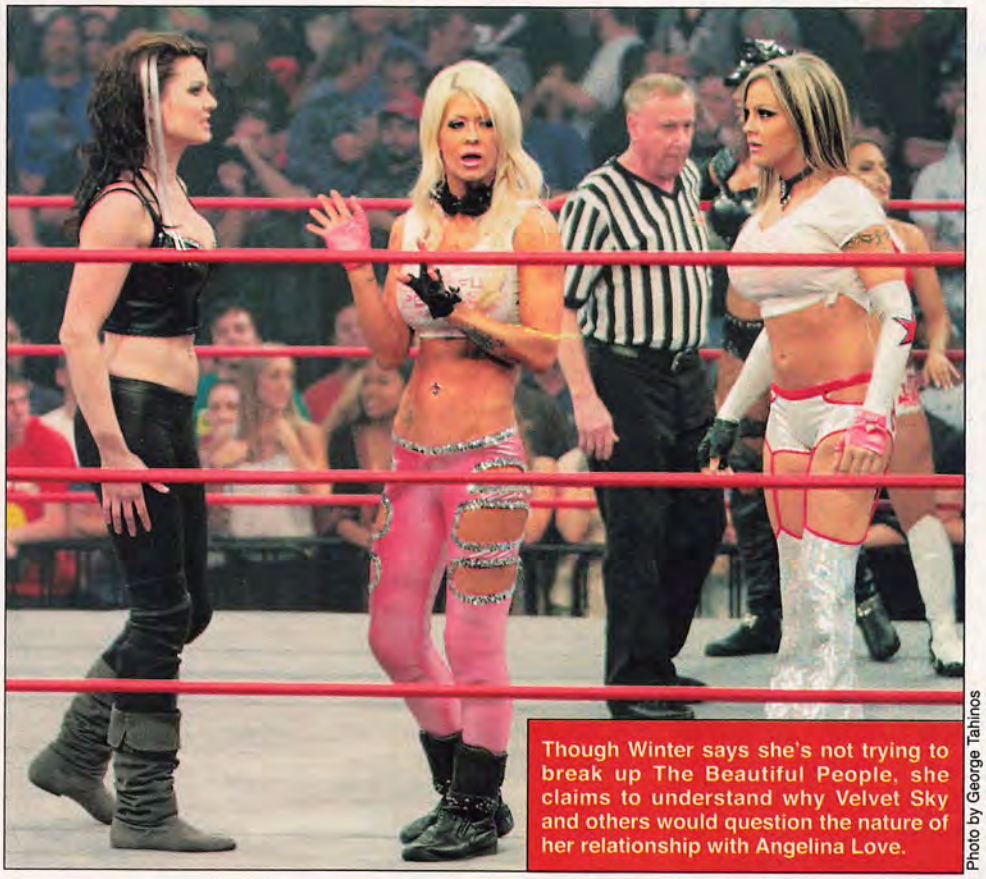
FUNNIEST ROAD STORY: "It involves Christopher Daniels losing his wallet, AJ Styles falling in a pool, and Samoa Joe and myself laughing hysterically. Unfortunately, I cannot elaborate."

BIGGEST INFLUENCES: "First and foremost, God. My parents. And in wrestling, Bret Hart, Owen Hart, Tito Santana, Ricky Steamboat, The British Bulldogs, and Shawn Michaels."

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Defending his X division title against Jay Lethal at Genesis, Kazarian put on display the skills that he was initially taught by Killer Kowalski, honed on the indy circuit, and perfected in TNA.

PRESS CONFERENCE



Though Winter says she's not trying to break up The Beautiful People, she claims to understand why Velvet Sky and others would question the nature of her relationship with Angelina Love.

Photo by George Tahinos

WINTER

WINTER HAS ONLY been a member of TNA's roster for a few months, but she has wasted no time in making her presence felt in the Knockouts division and on The Beautiful People.

Aggressively pursuing an in-ring alliance and a close out-of-the-ring bond with Angelina Love, the British vixen quickly worked her way to the top of the women's ranks. Whenever Love was in trouble in the ring, Winter was quick to assist her. Wherever Love traveled out of the ring, Winter invariably showed up to escort her.

When Beautiful People member Velvet Sky was attacked by Serena prior to her tag match with Love against Madison Rayne and Tara in the final round of the televised tournament for the vacant TNA Knockouts tag team championship, Winter immediately offered to step in. She and Love won the championship, but it has not been smooth sailing ever since.

While Winter and Love seemed to get along better than ever, others began to question whether Winter's motives were truly honorable. Specifically, Sky accused Winter of attempting to sabotage The Beautiful People either by stealth or self-motivated opportunism.

Love has been caught in the middle of the heated and violent exchanges between her longtime ally Sky and newfound protégé Winter.

Saying that she wanted to clear up the situation, Winter readily agreed to be interviewed by Editor-in-Chief Frank Krewda and Contributing Writers Al Alven and Bill Meltzer.

Winter insisted that her only motivation is to be supportive to Love, and that she was doing a service to Love by stepping in as her tag team partner when Sky was incapacitated. At the same time, Winter points directly to Sky as the real source of trouble within The Beautiful People.

EVERY ISSUE, REPORTERS FROM PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN INCISIVE PRESS CONFERENCE WITH A TOP WRESTLING STAR. THE QUESTIONS WILL BE DEMANDING. AND THE ANSWERS WILL REVEAL THE INNERMOST THOUGHTS OF THE GIANTS OF THE SPORTS

FRANK KREWDA: Thank you for agreeing so quickly to this interview, Winter. With everybody's busy schedules, it's not very often that we're able to get everything arranged within a half-hour of requesting the interview.

WINTER: It's my pleasure, Frank. But don't thank me, thank Angelina. She's the one that wants me to clear up everything that's been going on.

KREWDA: Well, if that's the case, we're grateful to both of you. Since you've already mentioned Angelina, let's start by talking about your relationship with her. How, exactly, did it come about, and what do you see as your role in relation to Angelina?

> "Angelina has told me privately—and I don't mind sharing it with you and your readers—that me being around is the best thing that ever happened to her career."

WINTER: I've always admired Angelina from afar, wherever it was that my travels took me in wrestling. I looked at her skill in the ring, the way she carried herself outside the ring with so much confidence, and just her all-around presence. So, when I came to TNA, it was an obvious choice for me to try and help out Angelina any way I could. It was a real honor to become her tag partner and an even bigger honor to win the tag team championship together. Unfortunately, Velvet felt threatened, and she started acting out.

BILL MELTZER: Velvet has accused you of either orchestrating the attack on her before the tournament finals or sitting back idly and letting her take a beating, so you could step in and team with Angelina. Can you state unequivocally that the accusations that you are trying to destroy The Beautiful People are untrue?

WINTER: Yes, I can and I will. Everything Velvet accused me of is absolutely, 100 percent false. I was only thinking of Angelina. Look at what happened. She had worked her tag team into a position to reach the tournament finals and, suddenly, Velvet can't go. Don't get me wrong. I felt awful for Velvet being attacked like that. I wasn't happy that happened. But when it did, I had an obligation to Angelina to step in and help her out when she was in need. We won the belts, and Velvet can't handle that.

AL ALVEN: Do you want to see an end to The Beautiful People, at least in terms of Velvet's involvement in the group?

WINTER: Absolutely not. Angelina has told me privately—and I don't mind sharing it with you and your readers—that me being around is the best thing that ever happened to her career. And I told her that she's the one who deserves all the credit. I'm just here to be supportive. Seeing The Beautiful People destroyed after Angelina worked so hard to form and then

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

With her height (5'8") and international wrestling experience (11 years), Winter feels that she makes the perfect tag team partner for Love.

reclaim control of the group would be a terrible thing. I'd never want to see that happen.

MELTZER: But is it fair to say that there's no way that Angelina can keep up an alliance with Velvet when you have become so closely tied to Angelina? Is there any reconciliation possible?

WINTER: I hope for Angelina's sake that the answer would be that there's room for all of us. I know how much The Beautiful People means to her. But, right now, I think Velvet is causing a lot of trouble for Angelina. Every time she forces the issue, I have no choice but to stand up for Angelina and for myself, and I won't apologize for that.

KREWDA: We've seen similar relationships to yours and Angelina's in wrestling before, and they all seem to end badly. For example, Mickie James once tried to ingratiate herself to Trish Stratus to an obsessive degree before turning on her. Larry Zbyszko idolized his mentor Bruno Sammartino for years until he perceived that he was stuck in Bruno's shadow. What's to prevent your relationship with Angelina Love from reaching a similar breaking point?

WINTER: Angelina is a smart woman. Look, at first, she questioned why I wanted to help her out so much. People called me a stalker and whatnot, and she was cautious of me. I never got mad about that. I understood. Look, when you get to where Angelina has gotten in this business, you have to be cautious of outsiders. But you can see what's happened since then. She has come to trust me and now we're as close as can be. I will never let anything happen to break that bond.

ALVEN: You'll have to forgive our skepticism. This being the wrestling business, there's a tendency to assume that someone is being used and set up for a fall. Both you and The Beautiful People have histories of treachery in your respective careers. That, too, is going to cause a lot of suspicion. Quite honestly, there are some people who feel that Velvet is the only one who has been completely on the level this whole time since you emerged on the scene.

WINTER: As I said, I can understand why people would have had suspicions about me at the start. But what has Angelina done, except get put in the middle by Velvet? I know that Angelina would never, ever try to use me or set me up. And I promise you that I would never let any harm come to Angelina. People nowadays read too much into things. What we have here is just plain, old-fashioned jealousy by Velvet that she didn't win the tag title with Angelina, and I did. It's as simple as that.

KREWDA: Please do a little self-critiquing for us. What is it that makes Winter a better tag team partner than Velvet Sky for Angelina? Are there any areas where you feel like their version of the team was superior?

WINTER: I have the benefit of more extensive international wrestling experience than Vel-

vet. Also, I'm one of the taller women in the Knockouts division, so I have the advantage of leverage. If you've seen me in the ring against someone like Madison Rayne, who is only about 5'2", you can see that I'm a little more effective than Velvet. I think I'm just a perfect fit for Angelina in a tag team situation. Velvet still has more experience teaming with Angelina than I do, so that's one thing in her favor. But I'm gaining that experience now, and I think the results speak for themselves.

MELTZER: As someone who trained and broke into wrestling in the U.K., how much would you say your approach in the ring varies from American-trained female wrestlers? Specifically, how much of the classic British mat-based style do you prefer?

WINTER: When wrestling at home in the U.K., I do think there's still more emphasis on the traditional takedowns and holds, and that was a big part of my training with Jon Ryan when I got started with NWA U.K. Hammerlock. But, to be honest, I prefer the wrestling style over here. It's more athletic and more exciting.

KREWDA: Obviously, Velvet and Angelina incorporate their looks into a lot of what they do. Do you feel any pressure to ramp up the sexiness of your presentation?

WINTER: Not at all. I am entirely comfortable in my own skin. Angelina and Velvet make it work for them, and more power to them, but I don't see the need to head in that direction.

ALVEN: Do you have interest in pursuing a singles career again? Hypothetically, if Angelina were to win her sixth Knockouts championship, would you challenge her for the title?

WINTER: She has asked me the same question, and I'll give you the same answer I gave her. That's all up to Angelina herself. □

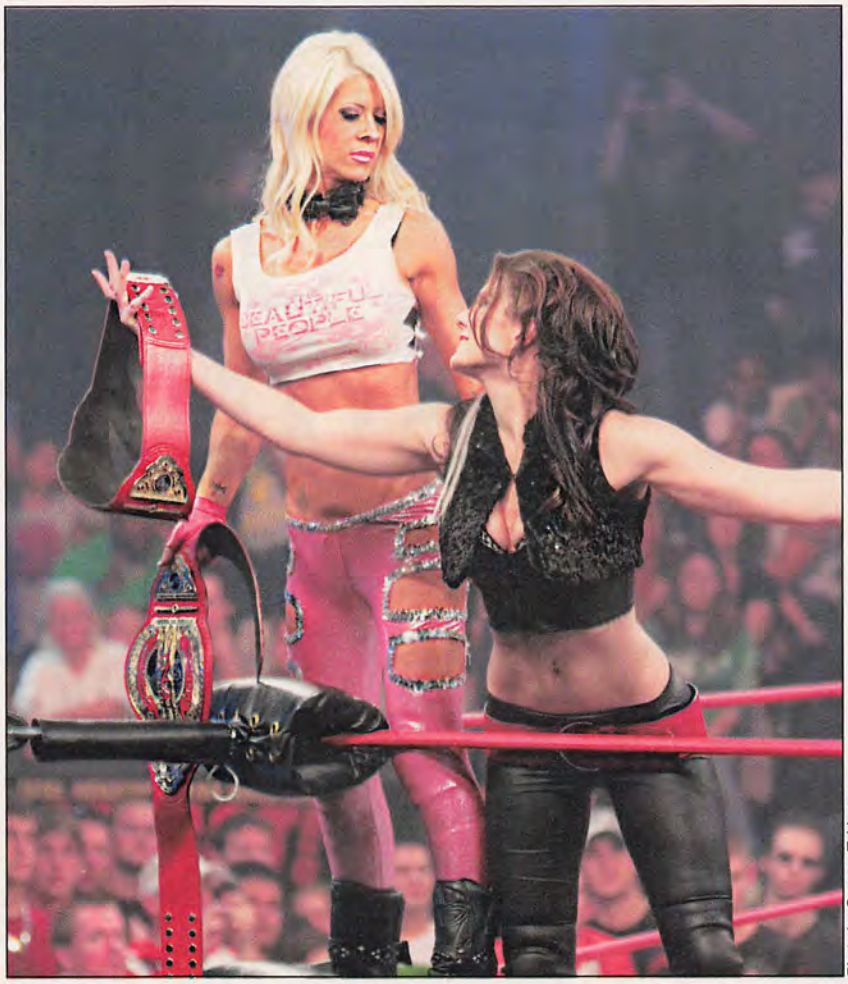


Photo by George Tahinos

Winter says she's admired Angelina for some time, and vows to ensure that no harm befalls Love while she's in TNA (above). Winter also says Sky (below) can't hide her jealousy over the fact that she and Love—and not Sky—won the Knockouts tag team title.

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

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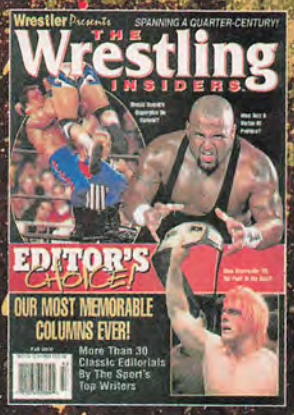
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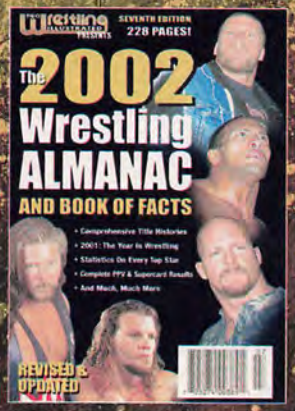

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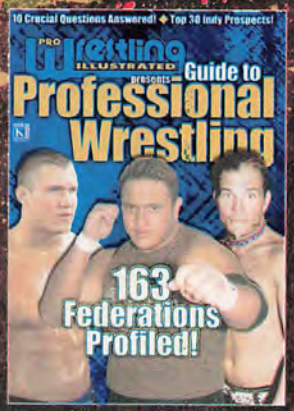
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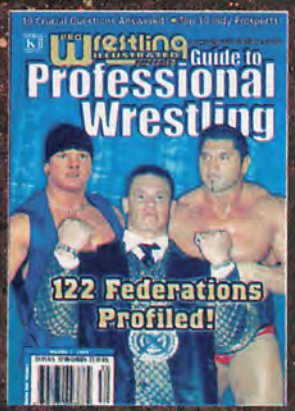

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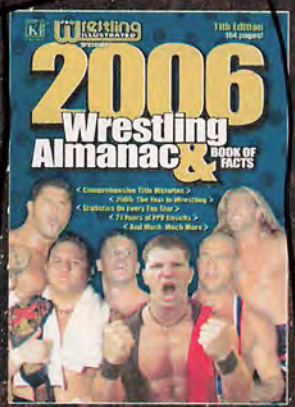

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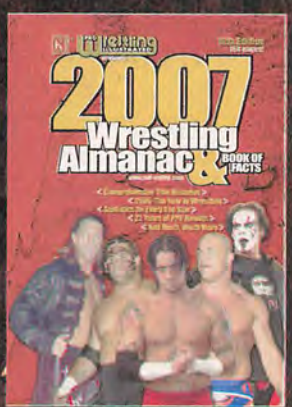

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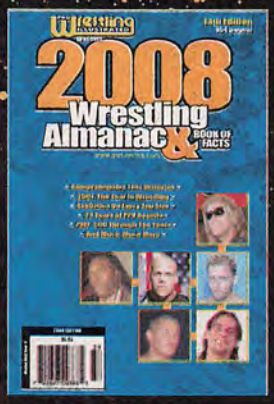

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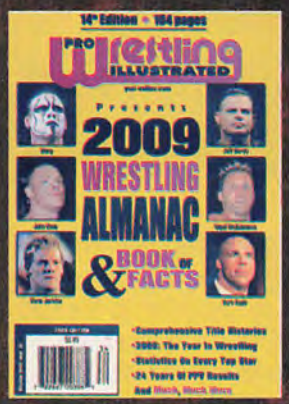

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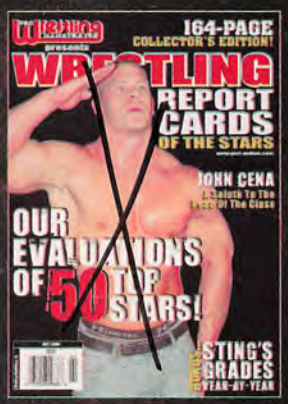

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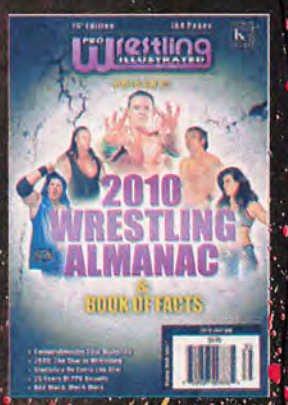

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THE 2011 PWI POLL

Wrestling's 50 Hottest Questions Answered

SECTION COMPILED BY **DAN MURPHY**

THIS JANUARY, 200 *PWI* subscribers received a phone call or e-mail from the *PWI* editorial staff. We weren't soliciting magazine subscriptions—we were asking questions and compiling the data that would become "The 2011 *PWI* Poll."

This poll started in 1993. Back then, the editors of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED interviewed a panel of wrestling insiders—including active and former wrestlers, promoters, managers, referees, and historians. We asked our panelists 50 questions, seeking their opinions on wrestling's best technicians, brawlers, and high-flyers, as well as their insights into the state of the sport.

While our insiders provided us with a unique point of view, we recognized that personal grudges, potential business dealings, and other personal considerations often prevented some panelists from providing honest and unbiased feedback. Therefore, we decided that the true "experts" are the fans themselves. After all, the success of any wrestler, or wrestling promotion, ultimately lies in the hands of the paying customers. When it comes down to it, the fans' opinion is the opinion that matters most.

"The *PWI* Poll" has since become an annual institution. It is a barometer for measuring the changes within a constantly evolving industry. It is an opportunity for a select group of fans to weigh-in on what they like, what they don't like, and to make their predictions for the future. It is an accurate snapshot of how our panelists see the wrestling world today as compared to the past.

Though it wasn't our intent, necessarily, "The *PWI* Poll" is like a focus group for WWE, TNA, and the independents. Savvy promoters and executives pay attention to the fans. Be assured that our panelists' answers to questions like "Who is the Most Underrated Wrestler in the World?" and "Who is Wrestling's Next Breakout Star?" will be discussed behind closed doors in executive boardrooms.

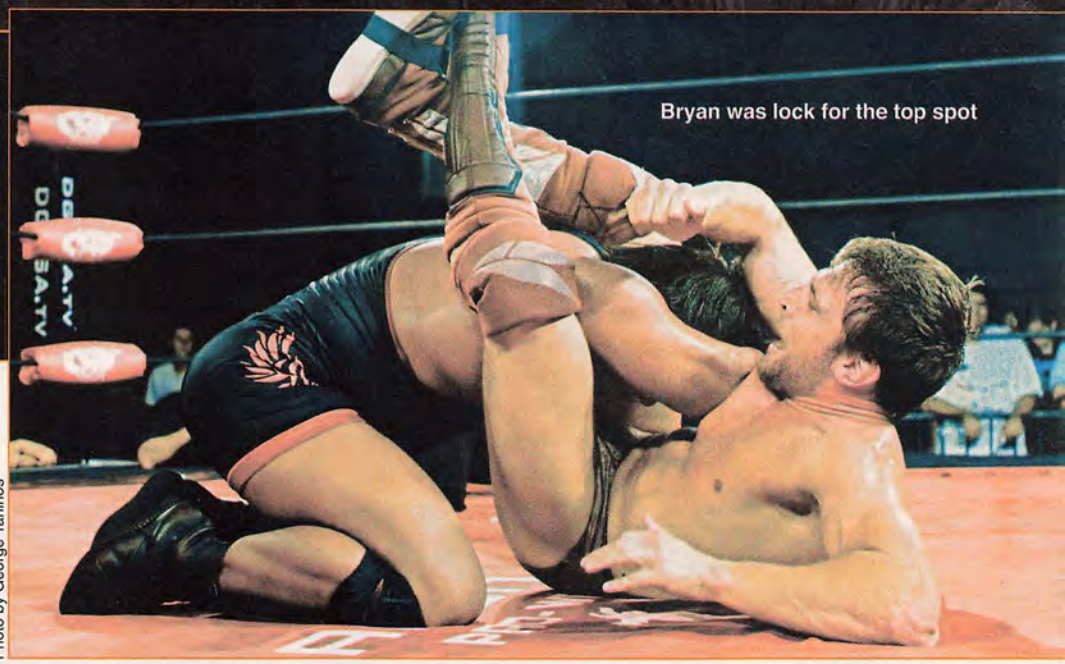
This year, we reached out to another random group of *PWI* subscribers. We contacted these fans by phone and by e-mail during the month of January and posed to them the 50 questions you will see on the following pages. We asked them to name the best wrestler, pound-for-pound, in the world. We asked what the most effective finishing move is. We asked who's overrated, who's underrated, and who should be considered the Most Valuable Player in his respective promotion. In some cases, we included insightful comments from some of our panelists.

We also asked our panel for information on their PPV buying habits, their perceptions of the business of wrestling, and their analyses of some of the year's burning questions.

As always, the answers we received provide good insight into the thoughts of today's fans. And we believe our "panel" of subscribers is an ideal focus group that can identify the trends, concerns, and opportunities within the wrestling industry today.

We hope you enjoy the 2011 edition of the "*PWI* Poll." And who knows … if you're subscription is up-to-date, we just might be calling *you* next year.

1 WHO IS, POUND-FOR-POUND, THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

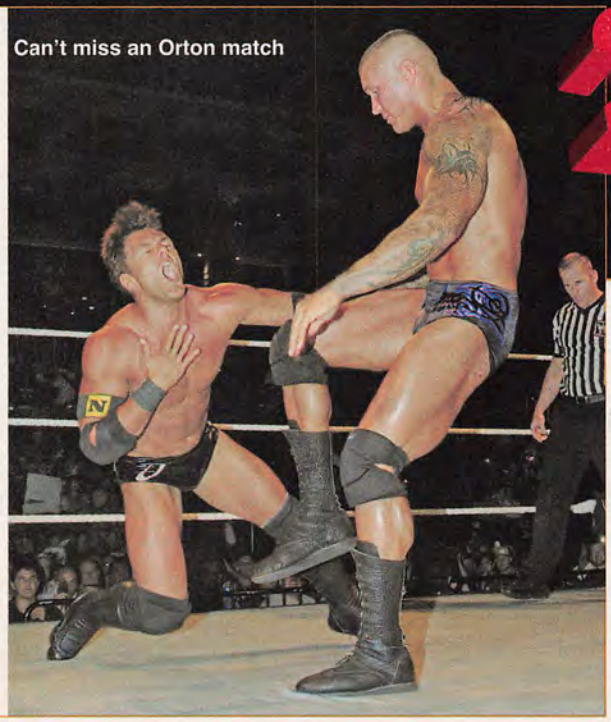


Bryan was lock for the top spot

Photo by George Tahinos

Daniel Bryan: 37%
Kurt Angle: 13%
Rey Mysterio Jr. : 9%
SHINGO: 7%
Davey Richards: 7%
AJ Styles: 5%
Randy Orton: 4%
Prince Devitt: 4%
Others: 14%

Daniel Bryan is back on top, and it was a landslide. The former Bryan Danielson dominated this category for five years before slipping out of contention last year and yielding the top spot to AJ Styles. Bryan's fall from grace had nothing to do with a slip in his wrestling abilities and everything to do with the fact that he spent most of 2010 in the relative obscurity of WWE's developmental program. Now that Bryan has made his mark in WWE, he has won over new fans while retaining his old Ring of Honor backers. Bryan and Kurt Angle accounted for half the total votes cast in this category, which shows how they have outpaced the competition. SHINGO owes Bryan a "thank you" as his match against Bryan helped make the Dragon Gate USA star an underground sensation in the U.S. Irish wrestler Prince Devitt has proved to be one of New Japan's most dynamic imports and has drawn comparisons to Styles and CM Punk.



Can't miss an Orton match

2 IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE ACTIVE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Randy Orton: 16%
Kurt Angle: 13%
John Morrison: 11%
John Cena: 8%
AJ Styles: 8%
Rey Mysterio Jr.: 5%
Daniel Bryan: 5%
Others: 34%

Randy Orton exudes an intensity that few others do, and that helps give his matches more of a "big-time" aura than many of his contemporaries. Orton's RKO is also a dynamic move that can quickly end a match. Those two factors helped Orton garner 16 percent of the vote as wrestling's current "must-see" performer. Last year's winner, Kurt Angle, slipped to second place, likely due to his diminished role in TNA over the past year. John Morrison debuts on this list for the first time due to his incredible athleticism. Cena is still wrestling's biggest marquee draw, while Styles, Mysterio, and Bryan all garnered support for their unique wrestling styles and consistent work rate.

3 WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Pro wrestling's lowly status in the perception of the mainstream public was on full display during Linda McMahon's failed Senate run. McMahon was haunted by footage from the Attitude Era, which featured outrageous storylines, raunchiness, and out-and-out silliness. The public has also become aware of the spate of deaths that has plagued wrestling over the past decade, creating a mistaken perception that the wrestling business is rife with drug abuse and dysfunctional personalities. Several of our respondents did say, however, that they are more proud to admit to being wrestling fans now than they have been in the past, since the WWE product is now rated TV-PG. Some also mentioned how grateful they are to John Cena for representing the sport in such a classy manner.

Linda McMahon was beaten down by WWE's past

Photo by George Napolitano

Mediocre: 40%
Poor: 30%
Good: 20%
Excellent: 10%

4 WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Photo Courtesy of Fox News Channel

You may have seen Cena on *Fox & Friends*

Opinions were all over the board in this category, with almost as many respondents believing the mainstream press is doing an excellent job covering wrestling as those believing the mainstream media is doing a poor job. We would suggest the truth lies somewhere in between those opposites. Mainstream outlets such as *Newsday*, the *Baltimore Sun*, and Canada's *SLAM! Sports* continue to do a tremendous job reporting on wrestling's biggest stories, news, and rumors. Several of the outlets that have deigned to cover wrestling have done an admirable job. By and large, however, the majority of newspapers and television news stations ignore wrestling unless there is a scandal to be exploited.

Poor: 35%
Excellent: 32%
Mediocre: 18%
Good: 15%

5 WOULD YOU JUDGE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?

Cloudy: 42%
Status Quo: 30%
Promising: 12%
Hopeless: 10%
Shining: 6%

Lesnar's not helping wrestling at all

Photo by Josh Hedges/UFC

Last year, our respondents broke through the clouds with a positively sunny outlook, with 46 percent characterizing wrestling's immediate future as Promising. This year, our Doppler radar shows much darker skies on the horizon. TNA damaged its credibility with its Monday night failure. WWE has struggled to build new megastars. The pay-per-view market is oversaturated. Ring of Honor continues to battle for its survival. MMA continues to eat away at wrestling's fan base. Seventy-two percent of our respondents predict that 2011 will be the same—or worse—than 2010. If wrestling is truly a cyclical business, then we're reaching the nadir. Let's hope the upswing comes sooner rather than later.

6 IS WRESTLING BETTER OR WORSE THAN IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO?

People have a tendency to romanticize the past and criticize the present. Our respondents are no different, with slightly more than half of those polled pining for the good old days of 2006. That year gave us the debut of TNA's *Impact*, the rebirth of ECW, Kurt Angle's surprising move to TNA, and a D-X reunion. Of course, 2006 had its share of low points—The Spirit Squad, Vince McMahon's feud with "God," and the debut of The Boogeyman come to mind. But 2006 also featured some memorable feuds and some storylines that truly pushed the envelope, including Mickie James' obsession with Trish Stratus and Edge and Lita's "Live Sex Celebration." Wrestling has also lost some of the stars who helped make 2006 so exciting, including Chris Benoit, Batista, Shawn Michaels, Umaga, Trish Stratus, and Bobby Lashley.

Worse: 52%
Better: 48%

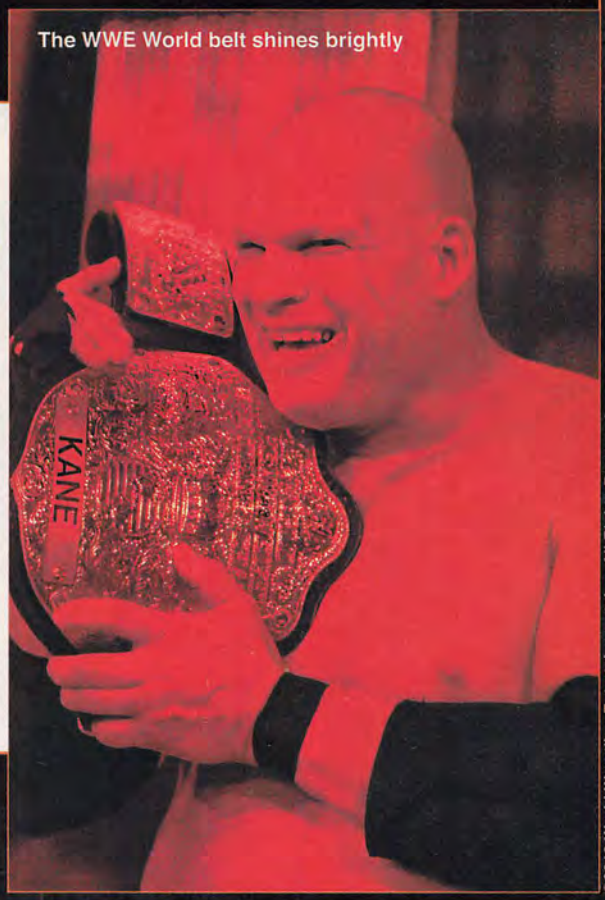
D-X was a huge hit in 2006

Photo by George Napolitano

7 ASSUMING THE WWE TITLE IS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS IN NORTH AMERICA, RANK THE NEXT FIVE.

This year's results mostly mirror last year, with a notable change in fifth place. The TNA tag team championship becomes the first tag team title ever to be ranked as one of the five most prestigious championships in North America, replacing the defunct ECW championship. TNA has done an impressive job featuring tag team wrestling over the past few years, while the WWE Intercontinental—long considered to be the premier secondary championship in the U.S.—has become an afterthought on the Smackdown brand. The U.S. title has enjoyed a revival since moving to Raw, and Daniel Bryan has done a terrific job in restoring prestige to that championship since winning it from The Miz.

WWE World title: 41%
TNA World title: 38%
ROH heavyweight title: 11%
U.S. title: 5%
TNA tag team title: 3%
Other: 2%



The WWE World belt shines brightly

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Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

8 AFTER ONE YEAR, HAS THE INVOLVEMENT OF HULK HOGAN AND ERIC BISCHOFF HELPED OR HURT TNA?

Hurt: 72%
Helped: 28%

When Hulk Hogan and Eric Bischoff joined TNA, they promised big results. They certainly couldn't have meant an 72 percent disapproval rating among our respondents. While more fans are talking about TNA, Hogan and friends have done little to improve the company's ratings, despite loading up the roster with veteran names that were pushed past TNA stalwarts like AJ Styles, Samoa Joe, and Christopher Daniels into the main-event scene. Under the new regime, TNA rushed into a ratings war and took a shellacking that damaged the company's creibility. With warring factions, bizarre gimmick matches, incomprehensible storylines, and the presence of Hogan, Bischoff, and Ric Flair, TNA looks a lot like WCW circa 2000 … not exactly a good time for WCW.

So much more was expected

9

WHO DO YOU BELIEVE THE ANONYMOUS RAW GENERAL MANAGER TO BE?

Stephanie McMahon: 14%
Michael Cole: 12%
Jim Ross: 6%
Steve Austin: 4%
Triple-H: 4%
Others: 60%

It is entirely possible that Raw's mystery GM may be revealed by the time this magazine hits newsstands, but at the time our poll was conducted, the identity of the general manager remained unclear. If nothing else, should the GM's identity be revealed before the on-sale date, we'll get an opportunity to see just how savvy our respondents are. We received votes for more than 50 different individuals, including Roddy Piper, Paul Heyman, Jim Cornette, Bob Backlund, and Paul Bearer. Fourteen percent of our panelists think Stephanie McMahon is pulling the strings. After all, it's easier for the mother of a newborn to manage by e-mail then to travel every week. Twelve percent think Michael Cole is putting on a charade and ruling on his own. Jim Ross usually prefers not to draw attention to himself, so an anonymous GM run makes sense for him. The GM has used some of Austin's catchphrases, though "Stone-Cold" has always been the type to handle business face to face. As for "The Game," he's been off the radar for a long time … and always seems to have something up his sleeve.

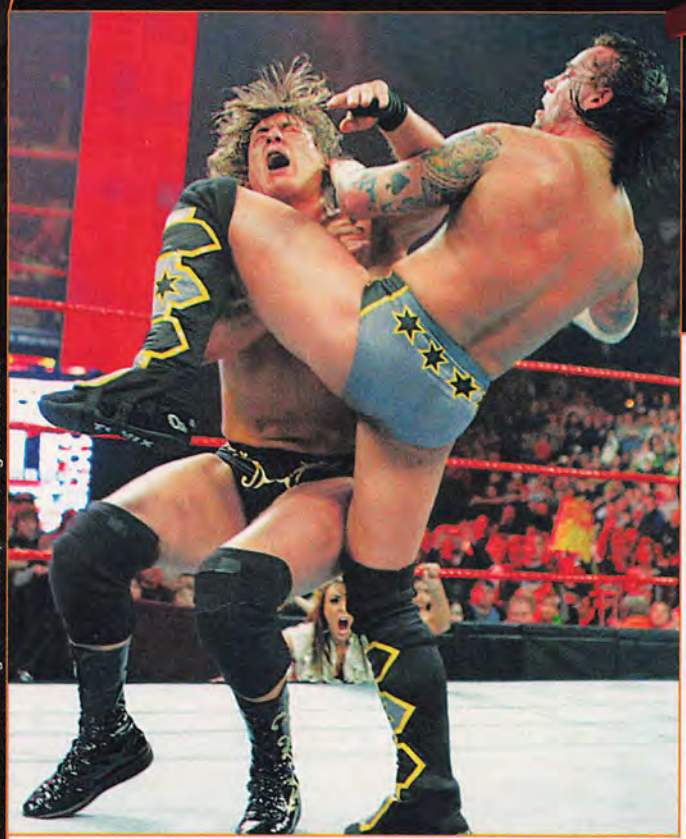
It's Steph! At least our readers say so

Photo by Gary Dineen/Winning Image

10

WHAT IS THE MOST DEVASTATING FINISHING MANEUVER IN WRESTLING?

Go To Sleep (CM Punk): 19%
Chokeslam (Kane): 14%
DR Driver Piledriver (Davey Richards): 10%
Top Rope Brainbuster (El Generico): 7%
Chaos Theory Suplex (Douglas Williams) 6%
Package Piledriver (Kevin Steen) 5%
Knockout Punch (The Big Show) 5%
Western Lariat (Satoshi Kojima) 4%
Tombstone Piledriver (The Undertaker) 4%
Others: 26%



Go To Sleep, Sir William

This question provided some of the most diverse responses of any question in this year's *PWI* Poll. Big men with simple, but very effective, finishers vied with independent and international stars whose risky and innovative finishers have made them YouTube sensations. CM Punk bridged the divide with a proven and dynamic finisher that has been effective in WWE and has a strong reputation on the independent/international scene (the Go To Sleep originally was popularized by KENTA before being adopted by Punk). Punk's success with the maneuver on the grand stage of WWE catapulted him to the top of the balloting. Kane's chokeslam and Big Show's knockout punch are simple, but are consistently effective due to their incredible power. Davey Richards' double-underhook sit-out spike piledriver is fearsome, as is El Generico's brainbuster off the top rope.

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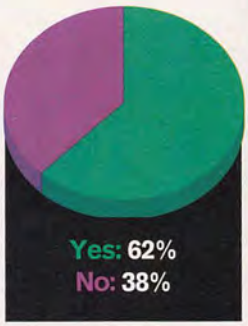
11 CAN RING OF HONOR SECURE ANOTHER NATIONAL TV CONTRACT?



HDNyet

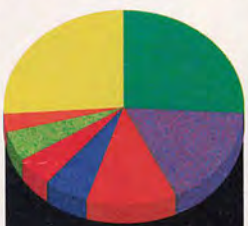
Photo by Scott Finkelstein

Now that its deal with HDNet is done, Ring of Honor is left without a national television outlet. With WWE and TNA holding steady (and sometimes struggling) in the ratings, and the inability of start-up promotions like Lucha Libre USA to attract new viewers, it may be possible that the televised wrestling market is oversaturated. But with ROH's devoted Internet fan following and unique, wrestling-centric approach, more than 60 percent of our panelists feel there's room for Ring of Honor on cable. The challenge will be finding the right outlet—a channel that can help promote the company and improve its televised product—and negotiating a favorable deal. It's a daunting task, but our panelists believe ROH owner Cary Silkin is up to it.

Photo by George Napolitano

12 WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST BRAWLER?

"The Big Red Machine" was on fire this year (not literally … this time). Kane proved that raw power and a mean streak were enough to dominate. Kane's offense is a throwback; he's not going to dazzle anyone with high-risk moves or complex submissions, he's just going to punch and kick people until he decides to end the match. Sheamus is cut from the same mold and may be just as sadistic. Abyss is TNA's resident hardcore horror, but disappointing losses to Rob Van Dam and others may have prevented him from winning this honor. Necro Butcher continues to let his freak flag fly on the indy circuit. Thanks to his role in *The Wrestler*, he'll likely appear on Best Brawler lists until he retires. Ironically, the next three finishers—Tommy Dreamer, Samoa Joe, and Vladimir Kozlov—have vastly different styles but can fall under the expansive umbrella of "brawler" in today's game.



At his brawling best in 2010

13 WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST AERIALIST?

Rey Mysterio Jr.: 26%
AJ Styles: 15%
Justin Gabriel: 10%
John Morrison: 8%
Evan Bourne: 8%
Mistico: 4%
Dragon Kid: 4%
Others: 25%

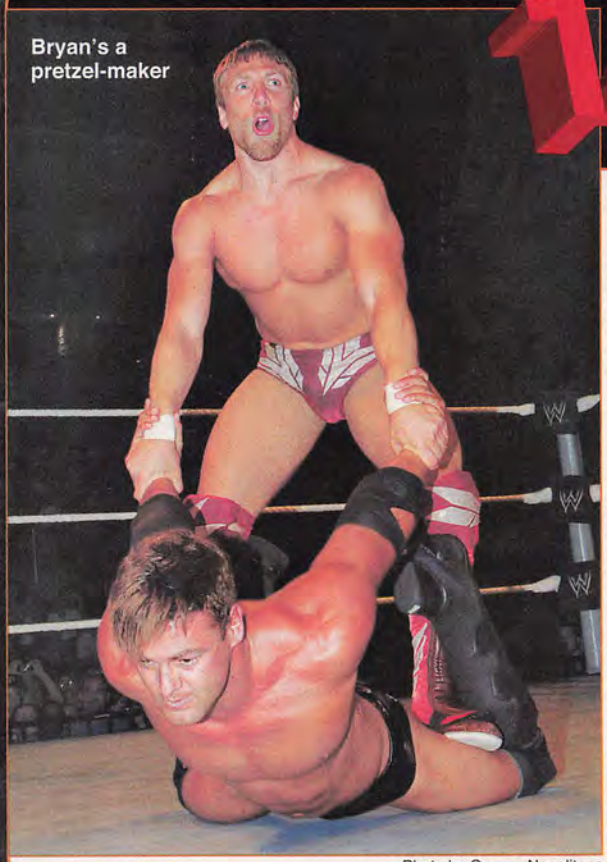
Rey Mysterio Jr. reclaimed the top spot in this category, beating out last year's winner Evan Bourne, who was grounded for several months due to injury. Mysterio has actually toned down his high-risk offense a bit in recent years, but his quickness, precision, and incredible balance hide the fact that he has slowed down a couple of steps from a decade ago. AJ Styles spent less time flying and more time brawling and bending the rules, but he's an exquisite aerialist when he chooses to be. Justin Gabriel scored high grades with his 450-splash, but has yet to prove he's more than a one-trick pony. Aerial attacks are just one facet of John Morrison's game, but he executes them well, while both Mistico and Dragon Kid continue to draw cult followings with jaw-dropping YouTube highlight reels.

Mysterio still sets the standard for flyers

Photo by George Napolitano

14 WHO IS THE BEST TECHNICAL WRESTLER?

Daniel Bryan: 26%
Kurt Angle: 19%
Douglas Williams: 14%
William Regal: 12%
Eddie Edwards: 8%
AJ Styles: 6%
Randy Orton: 5%
Others: 10%



Bryan's a pretzel-maker

Photo by George Napolitano

Just as it was in 2010, the Best Technical Wrestler category was a two-horse race between Daniel Bryan and Kurt Angle. This year, however, Bryan surpassed the Olympian and captured the honor with 26 percent of the vote. Long considered to be the top technical talent on the independent circuit, Bryan's exposure since arriving in WWE pushed him past Angle. Douglas Williams proved to be a worthy X division champion and his European-styled offense helped him stand out from the pack. William Regal had a relatively low-key year, but he is held in high regard for his innovative takedowns, punishing submissions, and the mastery of his ground game. Eddie Edwards' mat skills and Achilles lock submission helped him enjoy an impressive reign as Ring of Honor TV champion. While not widely considered to be technical masters, both AJ Styles and Randy Orton have used their grappling abilities to help them reach the top of their respective promotions.

15 WHO IS WRESTLING'S NEXT BREAKOUT STAR?

David Otunga: 17%
Tyson Kidd: 14%
Michael McGillicutty: 8%
Justin Gabriel: 7%
Crimson: 3%
Others: 51%

There is no obvious choice here. 2010 *PWI* Rookie of the Year David Otunga got the nod from our respondents largely due to the fact that he gets consistent screen time on *Raw* every week. "Otunga always seemed to be on the verge of turning on Wade Barrett and I can't see him co-existing with CM Punk for long. This is going to be Otunga's break-though year," said Ashton Lockwood of Indianapolis, Indiana. Tyson Kidd is following the Shawn Michaels playbook, dumping his partner and hiring a massive bodyguard—we'll see if he gets the same results. Michael McGillicutty may not be "perfect" yet, but he gets better each week. Justin Gabriel has the dynamic moves and he has the looks, but it remains to be seen if he has the personality to take that next step. Crimson got the best of Jeff Jarrett in his debut and has people talking.

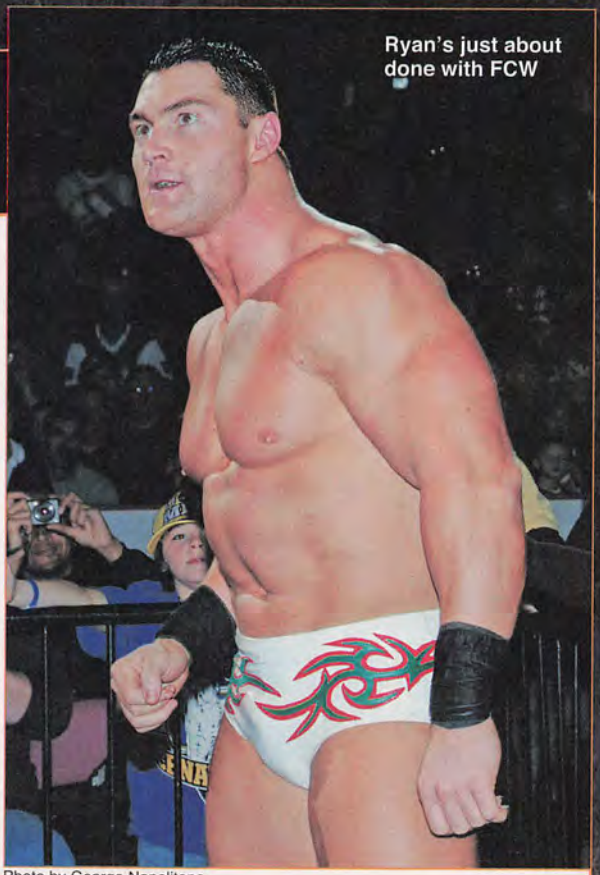
Photo by George Napolitano

Otunga's ready to shine on his own

16 WHO IS THE MOST PROMISING DEVELOPMENTAL STAR?

Mason Ryan: 42%
Seth Rollins: 15%
Xavier Woods: 10%
Richie Steamboat: 6%
Hunico: 5%
Bo Rotundo: 4%
Peter Orlov: 4%
Others: 14%

There's an unmistakable buzz surrounding Florida Championship Wrestling champion Mason Ryan, who debuted on *Raw* just as we finished conducting our poll. The 6'6", 300-pound Welshman is being hailed in some circles as "the next Batista" due to his freakish physique and intense, high-impact style. With his sheer size and power, Ryan should be able to make an immediate impact, especially now that he is aligned with CM Punk and Nexus. Seth Rollins (the former Tyler Black) is a former Ring of Honor champion who looked good in winning FCW's Jack Brisco Classic Tournament. Xavier Woods, best known for his TNA run as Consequences Creed, has the charisma and punching power to be the next Kofi Kingston. Richie Steamboat and Bo Rotundo have the famous surnames in their favor, but also have talent.

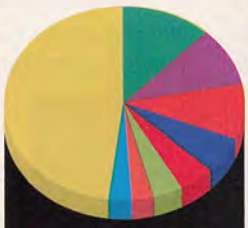


Ryan's just about done with FCW

Photo by George Napolitano

17 WHO IS THE MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

Former Hart Dynasty member Tyson Kidd topped a crowded list of candidates in this category, earning the top spot with just 12 percent of the vote. Wins have been hard to come by since splitting with D.H. Smith, but Kidd's fluid execution, innovative offense, and superior chain-wrestling impressed our voters, with several respondents saying Kidd looked like a star in recent matches against John Morrison. Kaval was impressive on *NXT* but never gained traction on the main roster. Roderick Strong has been a respected utility man and he's rising to the task of being ROH's centerpiece. Jay Lethal, Eric Young, and William Regal are perennially cited as underrated, while Ted DiBiase Jr. has simply underachieved since the fall of Legacy. Some of the others receiving votes included Brian Kendrick, Rhino, Justin Gabriel, Douglas Williams, and Kazarian.



Tyson Kidd: 12%
Kaval: 10%
Roderick Strong: 9%
Jay Lethal: 6%
Ted DiBiase Jr.: 5%
Eric Young: 4%
William Regal: 3%
Michael McGillicutty: 3%
Others: 48%

Tyson turns heads, just like that other Tyson

Photo by George Napolitano

Is Hardy's career about to go up in smoke?

18 WHO IS THE MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER IN THE WORLD?

Jeff Hardy: 17%
John Cena: 12%
The Big Show: 10%
Matt Hardy: 8%
Mark Henry: 6%
Samoa Joe: 6%
Mr. Anderson: 5%
Others: 36%

Jeff Hardy turned on his fans … and it seems his fans have turned on him, too. Hardy went from superhero to scapegoat in 2010. Since joining TNA, Hardy seems to have lost the competitive spark that made him the "charismatic enigma" he once was. Dogged by charges of drug trafficking and possession, he just didn't seem to be himself. Then Hardy helped form Immortal and got caught up in a major backlash—as did his brother, Matt, whose bizarre online rants had fans questioning his well being. The Hardys went from rock stars to pariahs. John Cena, The Big Show, and Samoa Joe are perennial vote-getters in the overrated category. Mr. Anderson's high showing is a bit of a surprise, but seems to be the result of a lack of clean-cut victories over main-event opponents.

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

19 WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST WOMAN?

There's no doubt about it—Velvet Sky looks good from every angle, but it's her incomparable ring entrance that never fails to stop the show. Our respondents are clearly smitten with Velvet's kewpie-doll face as well as her dangerous curves. Her come-hither eyes can entrance, and her 32D-22-32 body can stop men in their tracks. Eve Torres narrowly beat out last year's winner, Maryse, for second place, thanks to some of her sexy dance moves. Mickie James received about as many votes this year as she did last year, which shows that her move to TNA hasn't affected her sex appeal. We wonder how Michelle McCool will react when she finds out that her Lay-Cool partner Layla placed higher than she did.

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Velvet Sky: 20%
Eve Torres: 11%
Maryse: 10%
Alicia Fox: 7%
Mickie James: 6%
Angelina Love: 4%
Layla: 3%
Kelly Kelly: 3%
Others: 36%

Photo by George Napolitano

20 WHO IS WRESTLING'S SEXIEST MAN?

For the second consecutive year, "The Shaman Of Sexy" lived up to his name, handily winning honors as Wrestling's Sexiest Man. Morrison scored high points for his ridiculous abs, his flowing locks, and a butt one female subscriber described as "scrumptious." Morrison has the handsome features of a marquee idol and the athleticism of an Olympian. Randy Orton's lean body and intense eyes helped him snag 15 percent of the vote, while CM Punk appealed to voters who are drawn to nonconformist bad boys. In a bit of a surprise, Desmond Wolfe proved to be the sexiest man in TNA and even received more support than John Cena. In an even bigger surprise, Kane managed to garner 2 percent of the vote. Apparently "sexy" is in the eye of the beholder.

John Morrison: 24%
Randy Orton: 15%
Ted DiBiase Jr.: 10%
CM Punk: 8%
Desmond Wolfe: 6%
John Cena: 5%
Others: 32%

21 WHO DOES THE BEST PROMOS?

CM Punk: 26%
Mr. Anderson: 12%
Pope D'Angelo Dinero: 10%
The Miz: 8%
John Cena: 7%
Jeff Jarrett: 5%
Ric Flair: 5%
Bully Ray: 4%
Others: 23%

"The Straight-Edge Superstar" ran away with the Best Promo category, scoring more than double the number of votes than his closest competitor, Mr. Anderson. Punk was masterful on the microphone in 2010 and even earned a guest spot at the *Raw* announce table for a few weeks. "When Punk speaks, it sounds like he means every single word he says. Everything comes straight from the heart; he's not reciting lame catchphrases or making corny jokes," said Colin Ritchie of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Punk's verbal attack on Rey Mysterio Jr.'s daughter, Aaliyah, was one of the most wicked promos in recent years. Mr. Anderson's entire career is built on his promo wizardry, which has taken him to the TNA World title. The Pope's congregation praises his unique Gospel. Miz may not be popular, but he's certainly comfortable on the mike. Cena's promos aren't everyone's cup of tea, but his fans eat them up.

Nobody can deliver on the mike like CM

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22 WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST TV ANNOUNCER?

Taz: 23%
Dave Prazak: 21%
Todd Grisham: 19%
Jerry Lawler: 16%
Matt Striker: 12%
Mike Tenay: 7%
Others: 2%

For more than a decade, Jim Ross dominated this category. With Ross out of the picture, there was a heated competition for the top spot this year, with TNA color commentator Taz edging out Ring of Honor's Dave Prazak, *Smackdown's* Todd Grisham, and *Raw's* Jerry Lawler. Taz is a unique voice with a vast knowledge of wrestling holds. Prazak has an encyclopedic knowledge of moves and holds and always does his homework before calling a match. Grisham is steady and workmanlike, if unassuming. Lawler can be entertaining, if not necessarily insightful. Matt Striker is a student of the game, but he can come off as smug and condescending at times. Mike Tenay draws some criticism for cheerleading, but his knowledge and passion are obvious. While the subject of wrestling's best announcer may be open to debate, one prominent announcer was conspicuous in his absence. *Raw's* Michael Cole did not receive a single vote. Apparently we don't have many Cole-miners subscribing to *PWI*.

J.R.'s departure opened this category for Taz

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Still the one around whom all revolves

Photo by George Napolitano

23 WHO WAS THE WWE MVP OF 2010?

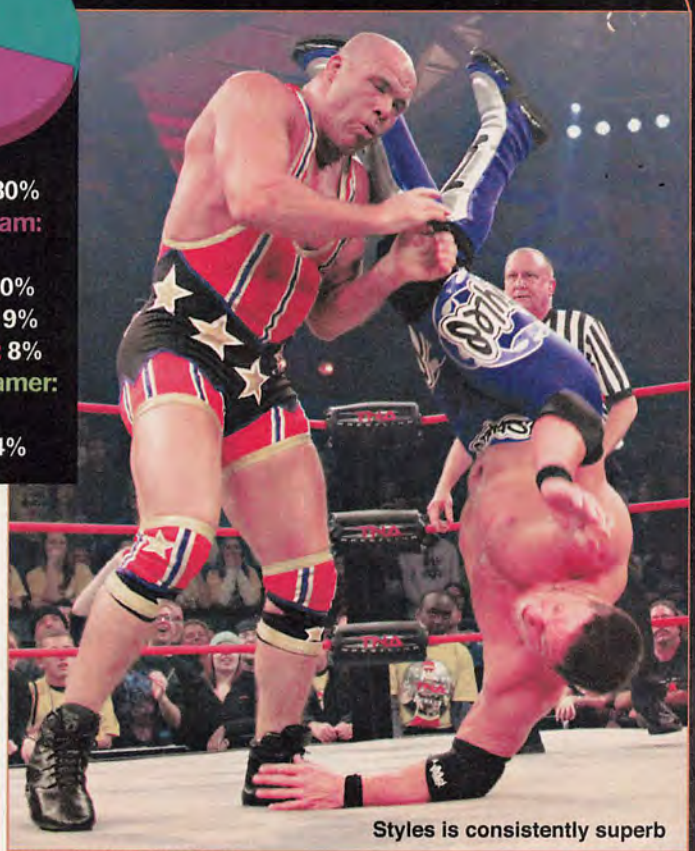
John Cena: 34%
Randy Orton: 27%
Wade Barrett: 14%
Edge: 9%
CM Punk: 6%
Kane: 4%
Others: 6%

John Cena only held the WWE championship for three months in 2010—Kane and Sheamus both held world titles for a longer amount of time. But Cena seems to be the superstar around which the entire WWE Universe revolves. His feud against The Nexus received top billing over WWE championship matches, and Cena spent the entire year as the most popular—and most marketable—attraction in WWE. Regardless of who holds the belt, it is clear that fans tune in to see Cena. Randy Orton successfully put Legacy behind him and developed into the popular fan favorite he was unable to be back in 2004. Wade Barrett won the first *NXT* competition and went on to make a huge impact on both Raw and Smackdown brands. Edge won the Royal Rumble, came up short against Chris Jericho at WrestleMania, and underwent a heel turn, a subsequent face turn, and a move to Smackdown before finally winning and losing the World title before leaving WWE in a topsy-turvy year. CM Punk's Straight Edge Society crumbled, but impressive matches and promos proved he can be one of WWE's most versatile and bankable attractions.

24 WHO WAS THE TNA MVP OF 2010?

AJ Styles: 30%
Rob Van Dam: 24%
Ric Flair: 10%
Jeff Hardy: 9%
Kurt Angle: 8%
Tommy Dreamer: 5%
Others: 14%

On January 1, 2010, TNA fans were buzzing about the impending arrival of Hulk Hogan and whether or not "The Hulkster" could lift TNA to new heights. Over the course of 2010, TNA saw Extreme invaders, several big-name acquisitions, loads of controversy, and a nouveau-NWO faction dubbed Immortal. But one thing remained consistent: AJ Styles continued to deliver incredible matches, just as he has done throughout TNA's history. Styles moved down the card a bit, but he remained a consistent performer and a featured talent. His versatility and superior in-ring work make him TNA's cornerstone. RVD made a big splash, but his momentum fizzled by year's end. Ric Flair was the mouthpiece for Immortal and wrestled some memorable matches against Mick Foley and Jay Lethal. As a manager or an occasional wrestler, "The Nature Boy" can still go. Jeff Hardy drew controversy and attention but was inconsistent. Kurt Angle slipped to the midcard and went missing for months at a time, while Tommy Dreamer launched TNA's hottest storyline of the summer.



Styles is consistently superb

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

25 WHO WAS THE RING OF HONOR MVP FOR 2010?

Photo by George Napolitano

It takes a lot to impress diehard Ring of Honor fans, but Davey Richards' unique blend of intensity, athleticism, and high-impact strikes have made him one of ROH's top stars. Richards never managed to capture either the heavyweight or TV championships in 2010 (though he came extremely close to both), but his pursuit of championship gold was one of ROH's top storylines of the year. Richards is at the cusp of greatness, and he might just have what it takes to be the best ROH champion since CM Punk. El Generico proved there is one heck of a wrestler underneath all the comedic antics, besting Kevin Steen in ROH's top feud of the year. Chris Hero and Claudio Castagnoli have established themselves as a top-tier tag team and have the promo chops and the wrestling skills to work any match on the card. Roderick Strong stepped in to fill the void created when Tyler Black left, but he is widely seen as a transitional champion.

Davey Richards: 28%
El Generico: 22%
Kevin Steen: 17%
Chris Hero: 12%
Claudio Castagnoli: 8%
Roderick Strong: 6%
Others: 7%

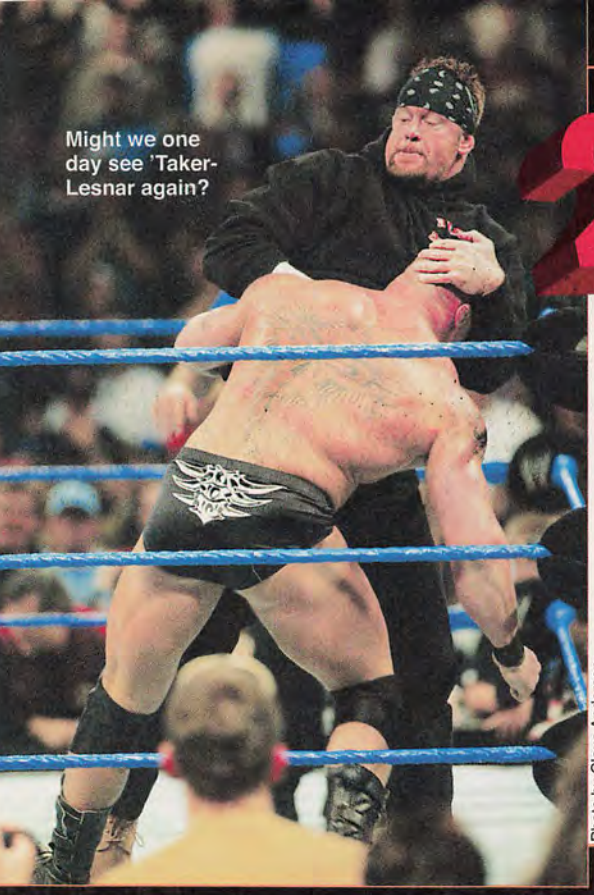
26 DOES WWE'S DEVELOPMENTAL SYSTEM HELP OR HINDER THE COMPANY'S ABILITY TO BUILD NEW STARS?

Percy Watson is a developmental success story

Photo by George Napolitano

Our panelists were almost evenly split on the subject of the WWE developmental program, with a very small majority believing the system helps WWE build new stars. "Almost all of WWE's top stars today came out of the developmental system, from John Cena to Sheamus. It has a proven track record," said Pete Vaughan of Hamilton, Ontario. Dan Myers of Sanborn, New York, disagreed. "The developmental program homogenizes everything so everyone looks alike and sounds alike. It results in a bunch of vanilla guys without any charisma." In Florida Championship Wrestling, developmental wrestlers are trained on "proper" wrestling and interview style, which limits the diversity found on the indy circuit. Whether that better prepares them for success or limits their opportunities remains subject for debate.

Help: 53%
Hinder: 47%



Might we one day see 'Taker-Lesnar again?

Photo by Claus Andersen

27 HOW LIKELY ARE WE TO SEE A JOINT WWE-UFC SHOW IN 2011?

Unlikely: 38%
It will never happen: 35%
Somewhat likely: 15%
Very likely: 12%

The rumors started swirling just minutes after Brock Lesnar lost the UFC heavyweight championship to Cain Velasquez. As Lesnar made his way to the locker room following the fight, The Undertaker, who was being interviewed at ringside, accosted him. "Want to do it?" Undertaker asked. The question was interpreted by many to be a challenge for WrestleMania. UFC President Dana White quickly closed the door on that dream match, but Undertaker's challenge did get people thinking: *What are the odds of UFC and WWE collaborating in some fashion?* Slim and none, according to our respondents. Seventy-three of our panelists see collaboration between WWE and UFC as being unlikely or never happening. Fifteen percent can see it happening in some capacity (perhaps still holding out hope for 'Taker vs. Lesnar), while only 12 percent consider a WWE-UFC event as "Very Likely."

Photo by Stu Saks

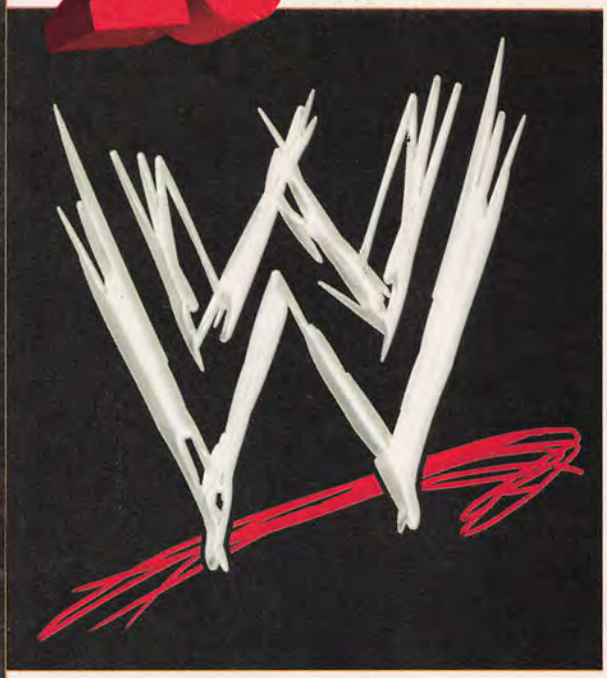
28 WHAT'S THE BEST SOLUTION TO BRUNO SAMMARTINO'S OMISSION FROM THE WWE HALL OF FAME?

WWE and Bruno should iron out their differences 40%
WWE should induct Bruno with or without his blessing 38%
Bruno should accept the honor on behalf of his fans 14%
It's okay the way it is 8%

Grudges come and go in wrestling. Tag team partners become hated rivals only to become tag team partners again. Forgive and forget. Not for Bruno Sammartino. The longest-reigning champion in company history and the cornerstone of the WWF through the 1960s and 1970s, Bruno has held a grudge against Vince McMahon for 25 years. Sammartino has yet to be enshrined in the WWE Hall of Fame, reportedly rejecting several offers to be a part of it. Sammartino's absence is a glaring omission, akin to Babe Ruth being left out of Cooperstown. Forty percent of our panelists agree that it's time for Bruno and Vince to bury the hatchet. "If Bret Hart can make peace with Vince without losing face, so can Bruno," said Justin Peresie of Cortland, New York. Nearly as many panelists said WWE should simply induct Bruno, even if he doesn't want to participate in the HOF ceremony, while 14 percent said Bruno should accept the honors for his fans' sake.

Bruno is to WWE what Ruth is to MLB

29 AT PRESS TIME, WWE STOCK WAS SELLING AT $13.83 PER SHARE. WHERE DO YOU SEE WWE STOCK A YEAR FROM NOW?



Our panelists are bullish on WWE stock, with an impressive 76 percent of our respondents seeing WWE stock as being a stable or growing investment over the next 12 months. Only six percent of our panelists foresee doom and gloom. The critics might say WWE's shift toward a more family-friendly format has led to a watered-down product, but WWE is doing a better job marketing to children and is selling a considerable amount of merchandise. The overseas market continues to be a lucrative area, while merchandizing, DVD releases, and even the WWE Films division has helped WWE diversify its brand. However, let the buyer beware. Last year, WWE stock was trading around $16 a share and our respondents predicted it would be valued in the $17-$18 range today.

Substantially higher than it is now: 27%
Slightly higher than it is now: 25%
About the same: 24%
Slightly lower than it is now: 18%
Substantially lower than it is now: 6%

30 AT PRESS TIME, *RAW* WAS AVERAGING NIELSEN RATINGS OF 3.2. WHERE DO YOU SEE THOSE RATINGS A YEAR FROM NOW?

Eighty-five percent of our respondents expect *Raw's* ratings to be within the 3.1 - 3.3 range at this time next year. Last year at this time, *Raw's* ratings were averaging 3.3, and it certainly seems like WWE has reached a certain plateau. *Raw* is wrestling's only live program and the unpredictability element inherent in live television, combined with the habitual viewing patterns of watching wrestling on Monday night, ensures that *Raw* has a stable audience. However, the *Raw* brand has grown a bit stale, and most of our respondents don't foresee any major changes that will dramatically affect *Raw's* ratings on the horizon. On the upside, only five percent of our panelists expect a significant *Raw* ratings drop in 2011.

About the same: 40%
One-tenth of a point higher: 25%
One-tenth of a point lower: 20%
Two or more tenths of a point higher: 10%
Two or more tenths of a point lower: 5%

31 AT PRESS TIME, *SMACKDOWN* WAS AVERAGING NIELSEN RATINGS OF 1.7. WHERE DO YOU SEE THOSE RATINGS A YEAR FROM NOW?

Last year at this time, *Smackdown* was drawing average ratings of 2.2. Since moving to Syfy, ratings have slipped about half a point, but a temporary ratings drop is to be expected following a network change. Now that *Smackdown* is establishing itself on Syfy, 80 percent of our respondents expect that ratings will increase over the next 12 months. In addition to the viewing change associated with the move to Syfy, Smackdown also has three of WWE's most marketable stars on its roster in Edge, Undertaker, and Rey Mysterio Jr. With the emergence of Alberto Del Rio and the addition of The Corre, *Smackdown* is primed for some explosive matches and feuds in 2011.

Two or more tenths of a point higher: 60%
One-tenth of a point higher: 20%
About the same: 15%
One-tenth of a point lower: 5%

32 AT PRESS TIME, *IMPACT* WAS AVERAGING NIELSEN RATINGS OF 1.2. WHERE DO YOU SEE THOSE RATINGS A YEAR FROM NOW?

When we posed this question to our panelists last year, *Impact* was averaging ratings of about 1.3. With Hulk Hogan and Eric Bischoff coming on board, it looked like ratings could only go up. They didn't; they dropped one-tenth of a point. While our respondents were optimistic last year (35 percent predicted a ratings increase of two-tenths of a point or greater), they are guarded this year. If Hogan, Ric Flair, Jeff Hardy, Rob Van Dam, and Mr. Kennedy couldn't lift ratings one bit, what could possibly move the needle in 2011? Despite the personnel changes, TNA has managed to retain its core audience over the past few years, and 38 percent of our voters felt that core audience would remain intact at this time next year. Thirty-nine percent of our respondents predicted that adversity would result in bold new storylines and compelling matches, resulting in a ratings increase in 2011.

About the same: 38%
One-tenth of a point higher: 32%
Two or more tenths of a point lower: 15%
Two or more tenths of a point higher: 7%
One-tenth of a point lower: 8%

33 IF YOU ARE NOT CURRENTLY A VIEWER OF *NXT* ON WWE.COM, WOULD YOU BE IF IT WERE STILL ON TV?

A growing number of people rely on the Internet for news, entertainment, and communication, but when it comes to settling down to watching television, our panelists are still creatures of habit. Many of our respondents stopped watching *NXT* once it moved from Syfy to wwe.com, but would resume watching the show if it returned to TV. Panelists cited a preference for watching video on television rather than an Internet stream, the convenience of DVR, and the ability to channel-surf as reasons for their decision. However, one-third of our respondents simply don't care to watch *NXT* at all. "The announcers did a good job of making me not care about *NXT* during Season Three," said Ken Albon of Aurora, Colorado. "Give me wrestling—not stupid contests, an overbearing Matt Striker, and lower mid-card guys as know-it-all 'Pros.'"

Yes: 65%
No: 35%

Yes, more would watch even this on TV

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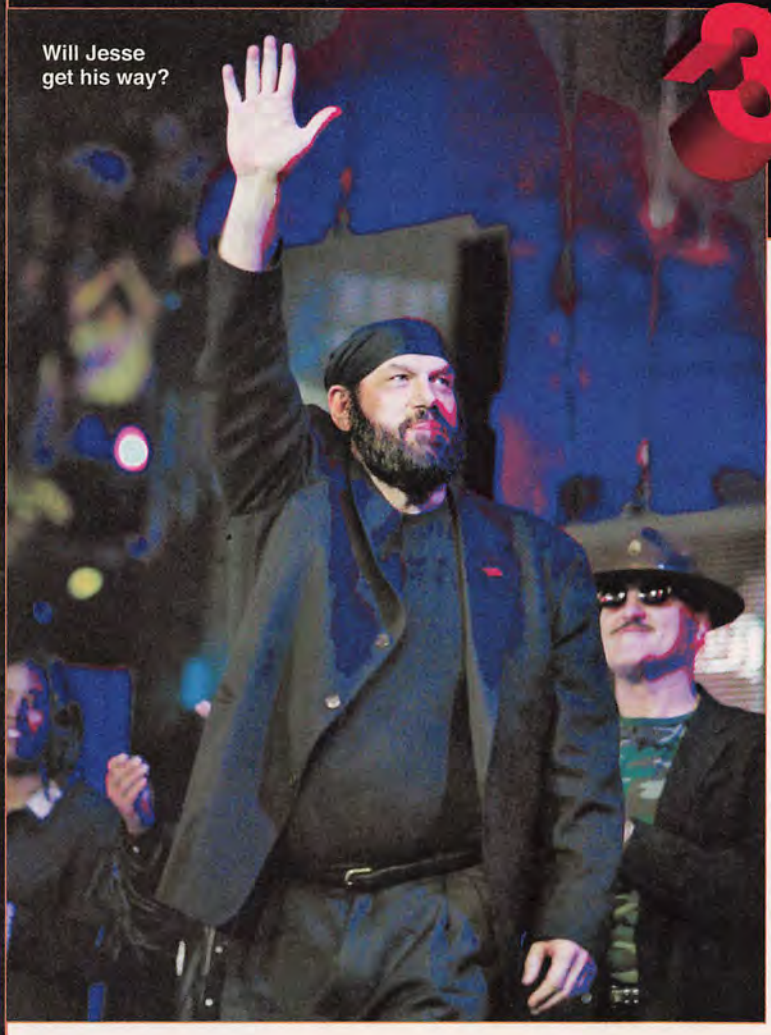
34 SHOULD PRO WRESTLING BE PERMITTED TO CLASSIFY ITS PERFORMERS AS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS?



Will Jesse get his way?

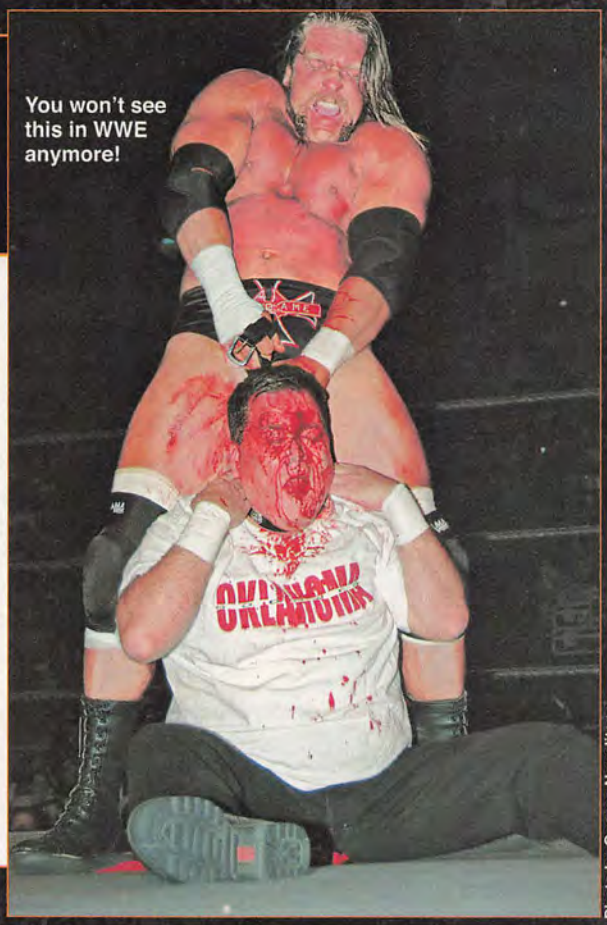
An independent contractor is a self-employed individual that provides service to a company without being considered an employee of that business, which is how WWE and TNA classify their wrestlers. This designation allows wrestling companies to avoid paying taxes and benefits, shifting the burden to the wrestlers. However, according to the IRS, you are not an independent contractor if you "perform services that can be controlled by an employer." So, if a wrestler truly is an independent contractor, why couldn't he turn down a WWE booking to wrestle for TNA or elsewhere? Are wrestlers truly independent contractors, or are promotions abusing the designation, as Jesse Ventura and others claim? Our panelists say it's time for the government to re-evaluate the classification. A vocal minority, however, say wrestlers are highly compensated, and if they want to compete for WWE or TNA, they must abide by the company's rules.

No: 75%
Yes: 25%

35 FROM YOUR PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE, IS WWE'S TV-PG STRATEGY A GOOD OR BAD THING?

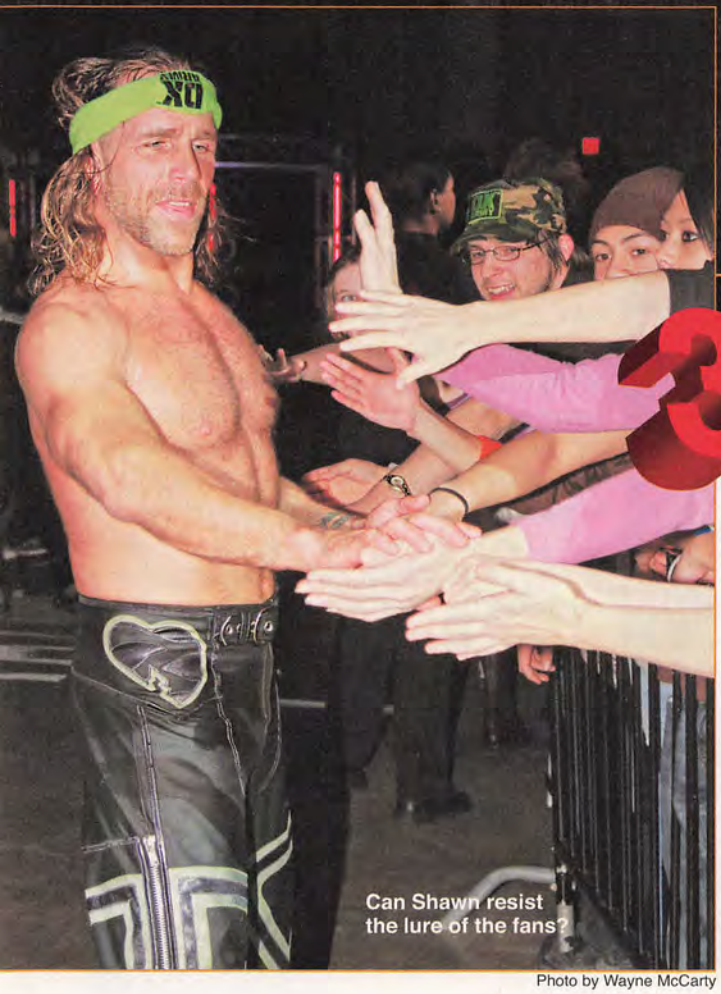
WWE clearly believes that a PG approach is best for long-term business, but we wanted to gauge the feelings of our respondents. Seventy percent of our panelists thought that the shift to more "family-friendly" programming was a bad move, saying that WWE has lost the edge that made it must-see programming before its reclassification. Some panelists complained that the lack of blood has diminished the drama of wrestling, and that WWE has become almost as "cartoony" as it was in the late-1980s and early-1990s. Thirty percent of our respondents feel that the move to PG programming is a good thing, as it attracts more children to wrestling (ensuring the long-term survival of WWE) and attracts more advertising dollars, which keeps the company profitable. "From a business perspective, it's the right move, but as a fan who grew up watching ECW, I hate it," said Mark Turton of Tampa, Florida.

Bad: 70%
Good: 30%



You won't see this in WWE anymore!

Photo by George Napolitano



Can Shawn resist the lure of the fans?

Photo by Wayne McCarty

36 WILL SHAWN MICHAELS WRESTLE AGAIN?

Wrestlers seem to have a different definition of "retirement" than most people. For wrestlers, retirement is usually just a year or so of vacation, followed by an inevitable comeback, followed by another so-called retirement until the cycle begins again. Even for wrestlers who have every intention of hanging up the boots for good, the rush of the crowd, the thrill of competition, and the lure of a big payday compel them back to the ring. Shawn Michaels says his wrestling days are done, but a slight majority of our panelists believe we haven't seen the last of him in a wrestling ring. "He's the greatest performer of the past three decades. I've got to believe he still has an encore or two planned," said Kevin Reieser of Norfolk, Virginia.

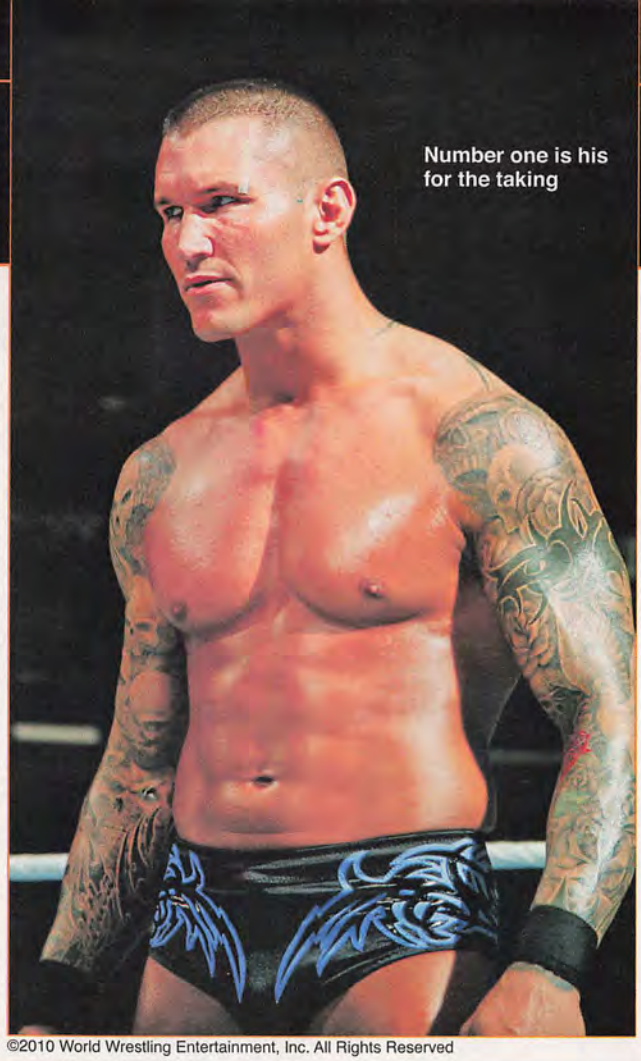
Yes: 56%
No: 44%

37

WHO DO YOU THINK WILL BE NUMBER ONE IN THE 2011 "*PWI* 500"?

Randy Orton was gearing up to face a weak-looking Miz for the WWE championship as our poll was being conducted, and one in five respondents foresee Orton taking Miz' belt, faring well at WrestleMania, and being in the catbird seat of WWE when summer rolls around. It's a safe bet, relatively speaking, as Orton took the top spot in 2008 and was voted Wrestler of the Year by *PWI* readers in 2009 and 2010. With 10 combined world title reigns to his resume, Edge is primed for a banner year ... provided he can stay healthy, while John Cena is a perennial favorite. Ten percent of our panelists think Miz is awesome enough to be number one, while CM Punk and Jeff Hardy are seen as dark horse candidates. Who knows? Maybe New Japan ace Hiroshi Tanahashi will be the first Japan-based wrestler to take the top spot; three percent of our voters predict it.

Randy Orton: 20%
Edge: 17%
John Cena: 15%
The Miz: 10%
Jeff Hardy: 6%
CM Punk: 6%
AJ Styles: 5%
Hiroshi Tanahashi: 3%
Others: 18%



Number one is his for the taking

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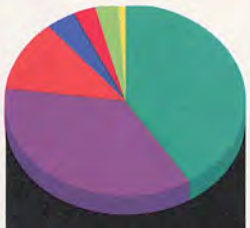
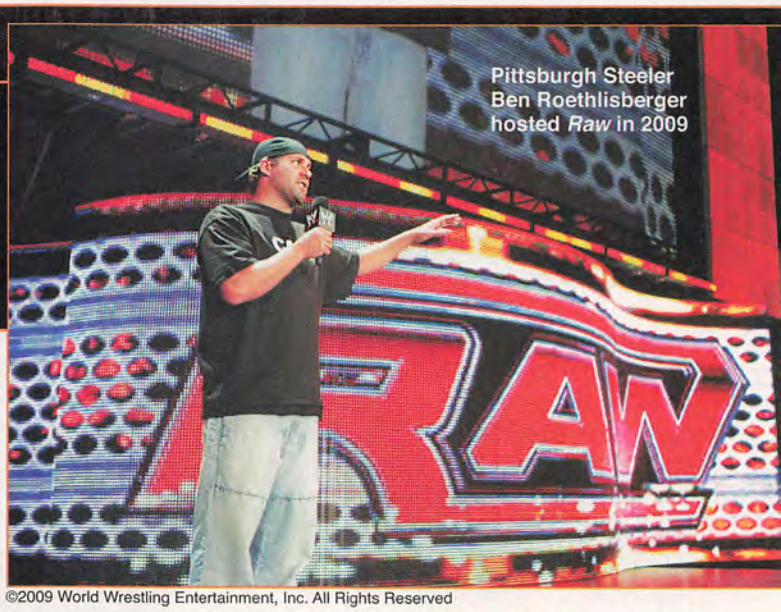
38

ASSUMING WRESTLING IS YOUR FAVORITE SPORT, WHAT'S NEXT?

Many of wrestling's top minds are sharply divided over whether MMA is competition to wrestling. While the similarities are plain to see, there are some analysts who believe that MMA attracts a different audience than pro wrestling. Not according to our numbers. While football is still the most commonly cited "second-favorite sport," a full 36 percent of our panelists name MMA as their secondary sport of choice, passing more established sports such as baseball, basketball, and hockey. "I'm a fantasy football fiend during football season, but for the rest of the year, I'm usually watching MMA if I'm not watching wrestling," said John Moran of Mobile, Alabama. "There are strong parallels between wrestling and MMA, betweens moves, and guys like Brock Lesnar and Bobby Lashley switching over." Basketball, NASCAR, and hockey dropped significantly from last year.



Football: 41%
Mixed Martial Arts: 36%
Baseball: 12%
Basketball: 4%
NASCAR: 3%
Hockey: 3%
Others: 1%



Pittsburgh Steeler Ben Roethlisberger hosted *Raw* in 2009

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Is Delirious TNA- or WWE-bound?

Photo by Joe Zanolle

39 WHICH WRESTLER WILL BE THE NEXT TO SIGN WITH EITHER WWE OR TNA?

Delirious: 18%
The Briscoe Brothers: 14%
BxB Hulk: 8%
Claudio Castagnoli: 6%
Mercedes Martinez: 5%
Kevin Steen: 4%
Others: 45%

It has never been more difficult to identify wrestling's next crop of stars than it is today. WWE reportedly is only looking to sign young prospects under the age of 30. To make it to the main roster, aspiring WWE stars have to go through the developmental program, and perhaps *NXT*, just to get a chance. TNA is looking to sign veteran free agents who may or may not retain drawing power. An indy star might have to go through a complete overhaul to get a chance with WWE, and might not have the credentials TNA seeks. That being said, ROH stalwarts Delirious and The Briscoes are our respondents' picks to make the jump, most likely to TNA, which places more value on cruiserweight and tag team talent. Dragon Gate USA star BxB Hulk could be a hit in TNA, while Claudio Castagnoli is long overdue for national success. Some of the others receiving votes included Shelton Benjamin, Tyson Dux, Brodie Lee, Chris Hero, Cheerleader Melissa, and Austin Aries.

40 WHICH WAS THE BEST WWE PAY-PER-VIEW OF 2010?

WrestleMania 26: 23%
Tables, Ladders, & Chairs: 15%
Fatal 4-Way: 14%
The Royal Rumble: 12%
Money in the Bank: 10%
SummerSlam: 8%
Others: 18%

With more than 72,000 fans in attendance and featuring the 2010 Match of the Year between The Undertaker and Shawn Michaels, WrestleMania won Best WWE PPV honors by a sizable margin. WrestleMania is WWE's version of the Super Bowl, and this year's event was the most critically acclaimed pay-per-view of 2010. The true competition in this category was for second place, with TLC, Fatal 4-Way, The Royal Rumble, and Money in the Bank all in the running. TLC won out, though it may have had an unfair advantage being it was the final PPV of the year and the freshest in the memory of our voters. Fatal 4-Way saw Rey Mysterio Jr. and Sheamus capture the gold, while the Rumble saw Edge make a surprise return and earn a WrestleMania title shot. SummerSlam was an underrated show that may have featured the strongest card, top to bottom, of the year.

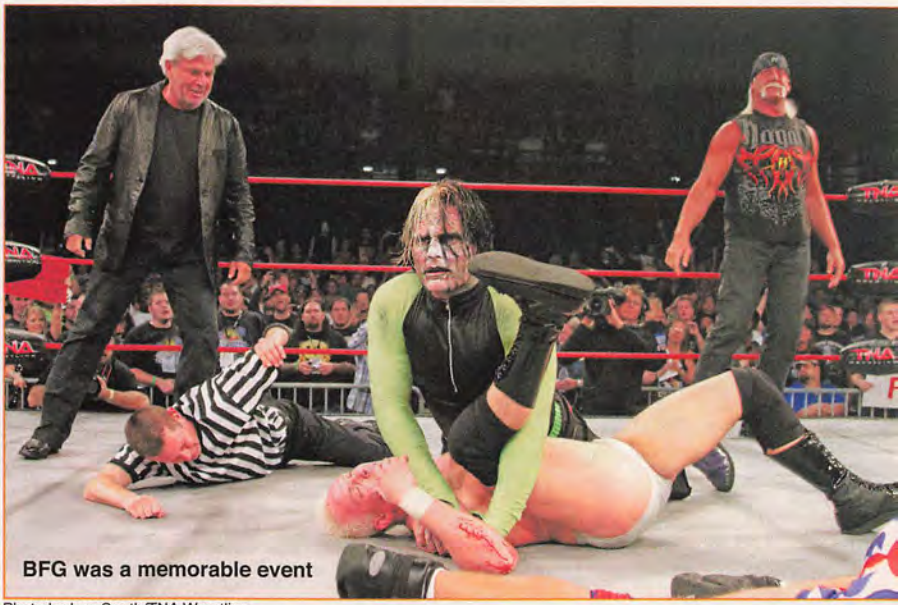
'Mania reigns!

Photo by George Napolitano

A1 WHICH WAS THE BEST TNA PAY-PER-VIEW OF 2009?

There were 12 TNA PPVs in 2010, and every one of them received votes in the Best TNA PPV of the Year category. On one hand, that's a true credit to TNA, as the company didn't deliver any major clunkers last year. But that also shows that none of TNA's pay-per-views truly stood out from the pack. Bound for Glory was selected as the best of 2010 by 17 percent of our panelists, largely because of the hype surrounding the arrival of "They." The purists backed Genesis, which delivered a fantastic bout between AJ Styles and Kurt Angle, as well as a solid match between Desmond Wolfe and The Pope. Lockdown took place in front of a passionate St. Louis crowd and was highlighted by Angle vs. Mr. Anderson. TNA's biggest gamble of the year, the Extreme-themed Hardcore Justice, received 5 percent of the vote, which is interesting, considering that 60 percent of the competitors on the card were not TNA-contracted wrestlers.

Bound for Glory: 17%
Genesis: 14%
Lockdown: 13%
Turning Point: 11%
Destination X: 9%
No Surrender: 7%
Hardcore Justice 5%
Others: 24%



BFG was a memorable event

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

A2 HOW MANY WWE WRESTLING SHOWS HAVE YOU ATTENDED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

Attendance at WWE cards is up ... at least among our *PWI* Poll respondents. In 2009, 62 percent of our panelists attended two or fewer WWE events. This year that number dropped to 48 percent with more than one-third of our panelists saying they attended 3-4 WWE events in 2010. The increase in attendance among our sample group might be a sign that the economy is finally improving, or it might simply be the result of WWE's reduced pricing for house shows. WWE super-fans are feeling the pinch, though. Last year, 21 percent of our panelists said they attended more than five WWE events in 2009. That number dipped to 18 percent this year. Fewer WWE fans are taking road trips to catch WWE as it tours, but more casual fans are making an effort to see WWE whenever it comes to town.

3-4: 34%
1-3: 28%
None: 20%
5-9: 12%
10 or more: 6%

WWE fans come from all age groups

Photo by George Napolitano

43 HOW MANY TNA WRESTLING SHOWS HAVE YOU ATTENDED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

None: 31%
1-2: 28%
10 or more: 16%
5-9: 13%
3-4: 12%

If you don't live in Florida, you're not likely to have been able to attend many TNA events in 2010. While the company has done an admirable job touring and breaking into new markets (including a huge house show in Brooklyn), every *Impact* taping and every PPV of 2010 (except Lockdown) took place in Orlando, Florida. Non-Floridians can count themselves lucky if TNA came to town once. This year, the percentage of fans who attended zero live events dropped ever so slightly (from 33 percent in 2009 to 31 percent), which is a small but solid step in the right direction. Because many Orlando-area fans frequently attend Impact Zone events, there is actually a higher percentage of fans who attended more than 10 events than 5-9 events.

Never know who'll show up at a TNA event

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

44 HOW MANY RING OF HONOR WRESTLING SHOWS HAVE YOU ATTENDED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

1-2: 35%
None: 30%
3-4: 25%
5-9: 10%

Photo by George Napolitano

Ring of Honor scaled back on its live-event schedule and put more focus on television tapings. Sixty-five percent of our respondents saw two live ROH events or fewer in 2010. Of course, if you want to look at the proverbial glass as half-full, ROH can pride itself in seeing that 70 percent of our panelists attended at least one live event in 2010. ROH still has a passionate segment of fans who are willing to drive from state to state to catch ROH on the road, which is a core audience any wrestling promotion would be happy to have. Still, if ROH ever wants to grow, it needs to attract new fans, and particularly without a national TGV deal, the only way to do that is to win new fans over with live events.

If you attend an ROH show, be prepared to scatter

Photo by Tim Walker

45 HOW MANY INDEPENDENT WRESTLING SHOWS HAVE YOU ATTENDED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

A common theme emerged as we collected responses to this question: Our panelists enjoy independent wrestling and go to as many events as they can, but the low number of independent events limits many held in their geographic area. "I try to get to independent cards when I can, but many indy promoters simply do a lousy job of promoting their events. I can think of two shows that took place within an hour's drive from my home last year that I didn't hear about until after they occurred," said Jay Battaglia of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Several other respondents had similar stories. An impressive 82 percent of our panelists attended at least one indy show in 2010, and the typical respondent headed to the local high school gymnasium, fire hall, or armory to catch an indy show three to four times in 2010.

The Shane Shamrock Memorial Cup highlights MCW's year

1-2: 36%
3-4: 26%
None: 18%
10 or more: 13%
5-9: 7%

46 HOW MANY WWE PAY-PER-VIEWS HAVE YOU PURCHASED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

SummerSlam is a must-see PPV

Photo by George Napolitano

WWE presented 13 pay-per-view events in 2010. The cost to buy all 13 would be about $595, not counting various cable fees and taxes (and more if you want high definition). That's roughly the cost of 25 John Cena T-shirts. That price tag has forced our panelists to pick and choose which PPVs they buy. For many of our respondents, WrestleMania and The Royal Rumble are "must-see" events. The novelty of the debut Money in the Bank PPV, Cena's battles against The Nexus at SummerSlam and TLC, and the Bragging Rights Buried Alive bout convinced fans to call their local cable or satellite company. Interestingly, almost a quarter of our voters bought no WWE PPVs in 2010. "Why bother paying for it when you get recaps for free on *Raw* the next night?" said Paul Thompson of Akron, Ohio.

4-6: 27%
1-3: 25%
None: 24%
5-9: 21%
10 or more: 3%

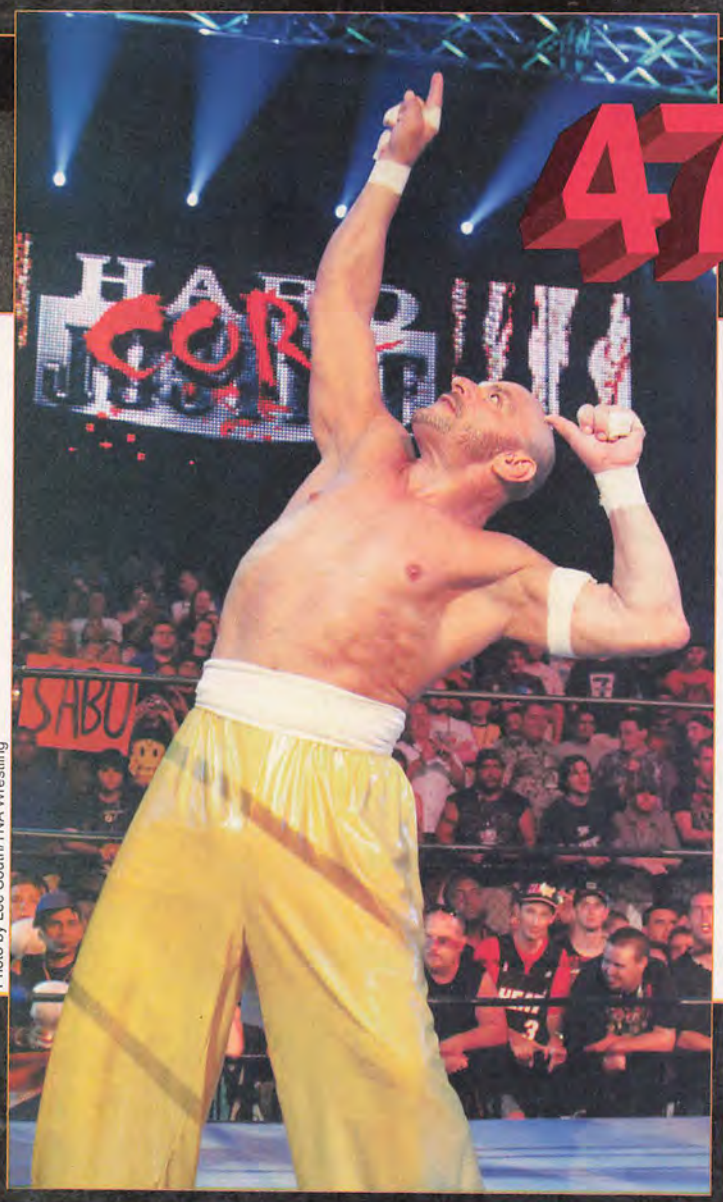


Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

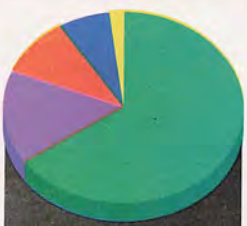
47 HOW MANY TNA PAY-PER-VIEWS HAVE YOU PURCHASED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

3-5: 35%
1-3: 22%
None: 18%
4-6: 16%
10 or more: 9%

The arrival of Hulk Hogan and the formation of Immortal may not have changed TNA overnight, but those two events did affect the buying habits of our panelists. Last year, the most common response in this category was 1-3 (34%). This year, 35 percent of our respondents answered 4-6, indicating that our focus group was more interested in TNA's PPV offerings in 2010 than they were in 2009. Much of the credit for that has to do with the initial interest surrounding the incoming Hogan/Bischoff regime, the novelty of a ECW reunion show in Hardcore Justice, and the huge buildup of "They," which culminated in Jeff Hardy's rulebreaking turn at Bound for Glory. Last year, 33 percent of our respondents said they had purchased no TNA PPVs over the previous 12 months. That number dropped to 18 percent this year. TNA management has to be happy about that.

Hardcore Justice was money well spent

48 HOW MANY RING OF HONOR PAY-PER-VIEWS HAVE YOU PURCHASED OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



None: 65%
Two: 16%
One: 10%
Four: 7%
Three: 2%

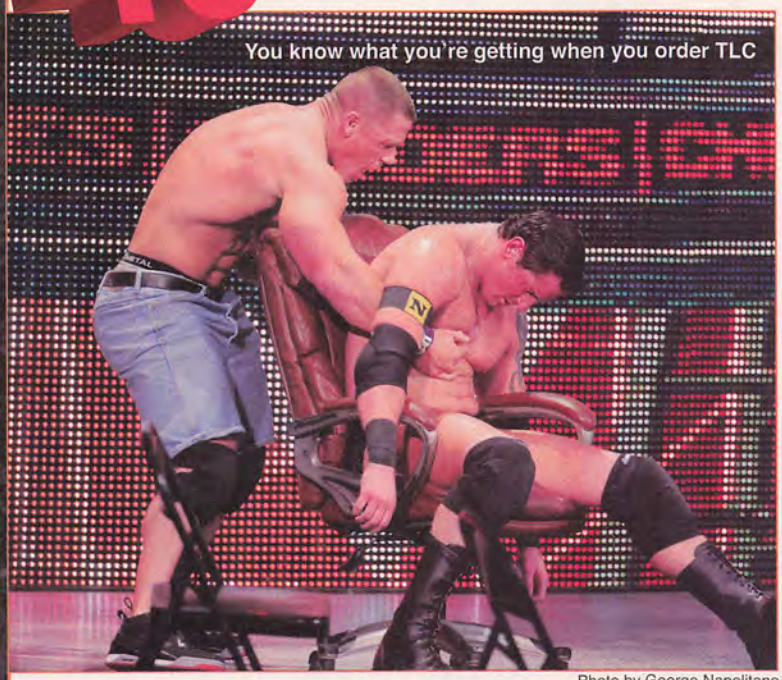
Ring of Honor entered a bold new world in 2010 with the launch of its Internet pay-per-view format. Theoretically, the iPPV model allows the promotions to reach a vast audience via the Internet. However, more than half of our panelists said they still did not purchase a single ROH PPV in 2010. ROH made a big step forward by landing a national TV deal with HDNet, but it may have cost the company significant PPV buys, as fans got their ROH fix on free TV instead of purchasing pay-per-views. Now that the HDNet deal has ended, Ring of Honor has reached a critical crossroads. To survive 2011, Ring of Honor must find a new way to attract paying customers.

Gofightlive.tv brings ROH PPVs to your computer

Photo by Scott Finkelstein

49 DO WWE'S THEMED PAY-PER-VIEWS CREATE MORE FAN INTEREST?

Yes: 60%
No: 25%
Unsure: 15%



You know what you're getting when you order TLC

Photo by George Napolitano

In the current economic climate, it is difficult to gauge the success of WWE's themed pay-per-views such as Elimination Chamber, Money in the Bank, and Bragging Rights by buy rates alone. We asked our panelists if they were more likely or less likely to purchase an event because of an overarching theme, not necessarily whether or not they actually *purchased* specific themed PPVs. Sixty percent of our panelists said specialty themed events have made them more interested in watching a PPV. "You take an event like Tables, Ladders, and Chairs, and you know exactly what you're going to get," said Tim Gordon of Augusta, Georgia. Some of our respondents actually said they were *less* likely to watch a themed pay-per-view for that same reason. "Specialty matches are cool now and then," said Shawn Kubiak of Hendersonville, Tennessee. "But I don't want an entire show of them."

50 ASSUMING VINCE McMAHON IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON IN WRESTLING, WHO ARE THE NEXT FIVE?

After Vince, Laurinaitis (far right) is the sport's preeminent power broker

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John Laurinaitis: 26%
Stephanie McMahon: 18%
Dixie Carter: 16%
Triple-H: 14%
Hulk Hogan: 12%
Others: 14%

As WWE Executive Vice President of Talent Relations, John Laurinaitis is arguably the most feared man in wrestling. A blessing from the former Johnny Ace can take an independent wrestler to WWE (or at least to FCW) overnight. A condemnation from Laurinaitis could result in a pink slip. Laurinaitis' opinion can make or break careers. It also helps shape the look of the sport, as wrestlers looking to get his attention sometimes try to alter their style to appeal to his discerning eye. Stephanie McMahon has kept a low public profile, but as the head of the WWE Creative department, she wields considerable political power. Dixie Carter is the heart and soul of TNA and has kept the company afloat in turbulent times. Eric Bischoff built WCW into a powerhouse; his role in TNA is mostly consultative, but his word still carries a lot of weight. As for Hulk Hogan, he didn't get a reputation as a master politician for nothing. Others receiving votes included FCW President Steve Keirn, Cary Silkin, and WWE Executive Vice President, Television Production, Kevin Dunn.

CM PUNK

IS HE DESTINED TO LET HISTORY DESTROY HIM?

TEXT BY BRIAN SOLOMON

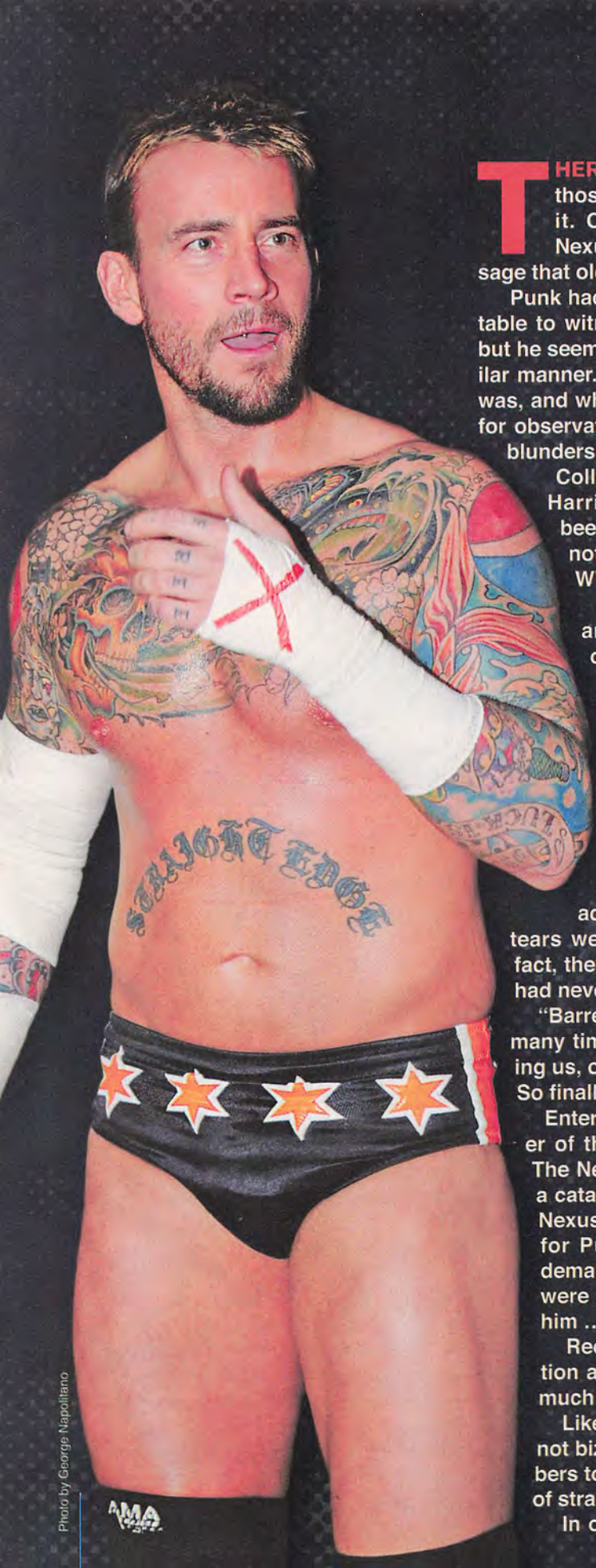

Photo by George Napolitano

THERE'S A BIT of conventional wisdom that says those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it. CM Punk, who is currently leading The New Nexus, may soon find out—the hard way—just how sage that old saw truly is.

Punk had a terrific vantage point at the *Raw* announcers' table to witness the demise of Nexus leader Wade Barrett, but he seems to be approaching his young charges in a similar manner. He's every bit as heavy-handed as Barrett ever was, and while the red flags and warning signs are all there for observation, Punk has no interest in avoiding the same blunders that doomed the rugged Brit.

Collectively and individually, David Otunga, Husky Harris, Mike McGillicutty, and Mason Ryan, have been driven for many months to prove their worth not just to The Nexus and The New Nexus, but to WWE as well.

As hungry, ambitious, young wrestlers often are, they've been extremely hard to control. In order to lead them, an individual must dial up just the right combination of diplomacy and despotism necessary to earn their respect and command their obedience. Finding this balance, however, isn't easy. Just ask Barrett.

During his time as leader of The Nexus, Barrett made the mistakes of constantly berating his teammates, taking advantage of them, and also taking them for granted. Perhaps that was why, after John Cena put Barrett out of action last December at the TLC pay-per-view, few tears were shed among the members of the group. In fact, they were more than happy to move on as if Barrett had never been among them.

"Barrett was just too much," said Otunga, who clashed many times with his former leader. "He was always testing us, ordering us around, and for what? For *his* benefit. So finally, we said, 'Enough!'"

Enter CM Punk. Ever the opportunist, the former leader of the Straight Edge Society stepped in and made The Nexus his own. Using his feud with John Cena as a catalyst, he seized the moment, and the reins of The Nexus in the process. At first, it seemed all too easy for Punk. Even when Barrett himself returned and demanded that Punk step down, it looked like matters were well in hand. CM Punk had The Nexus behind him ... or did he?

Recently, some cracks in The New Nexus' foundation already seem to be showing—and they look very much like the cracks that undid Barrett's leadership.

Like his predecessor, Punk has become a harsh, if not bizarre, taskmaster that is always forcing the members to prove their loyalty to the group through a series of strange and often violent "sacrifices."

In one of his first acts as leader, for example, Punk

The members of The New Nexus seem firmly behind CM Punk, their new leader, but, if history is any indication, that won't be the case for long.

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In what was a relatively bloodless transition, CM Punk took over for Wade Barrett. Curiously, Punk leads The New Nexus much like Barrett did. Punk's ouster could be just a matter of time, too.

demanded that McGillicutty and Harris endure a savage beating from the other members to show their dedication to the group. The *NXT* Season Two recruits reluctantly acquiesced, but Justin Gabriel and Heath Slater saw the writing on the wall, and rejoined Barrett and Ezekiel Jackson on Smackdown to form The Corre.

"Wade had his faults as a leader," Slater explained. "But the stuff Punk was doing was the worst of Wade times 1,000. You'd think he'd have learned from Barrett's mistakes, but obviously he didn't. I think it's just a matter of time before those other guys ditch Punk, too."

Some have chalked up Punk's blindness to his experiences in leading the Straight Edge Society. After all, while in charge of that group, the "Straight Edge Superstar" was able to exert his will and get his way with little or no resistance from his subordinates. Apparently, he expects the same mindless devotion he got out of Luke Gallows, Serena, and Joey Matthews from Otunga and friends. But what Punk does not realize is that SES and The New Nexus are two decidedly different factions.

The difference between the two groups is philosophical. The SES was, to put it bluntly, a group

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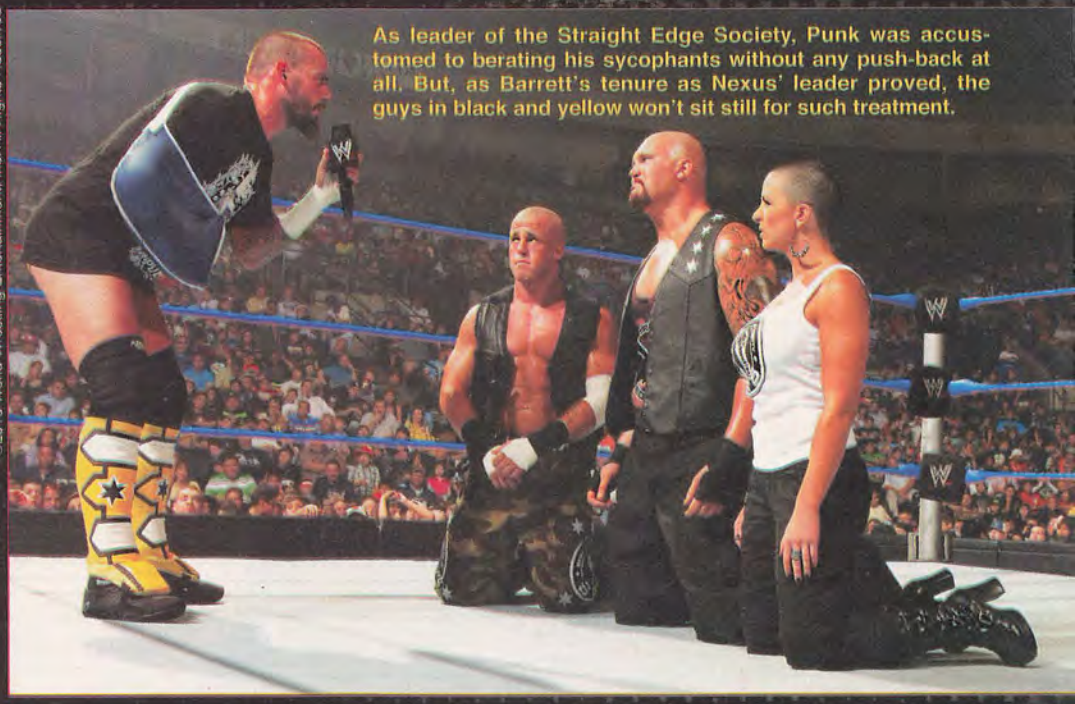

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As leader of the Straight Edge Society, Punk was accustomed to berating his sycophants without any push-back at all. But, as Barrett's tenure as Nexus' leader proved, the guys in black and yellow won't sit still for such treatment.

of followers. They were pawns, willing to serve the needs of their leader. They were individuals who had subverted their will to Punk's, and were happy to do it. Nexus, on the other hand, is the furthest thing from the SES. Its members are in a constant state of rivalry, all jockeying for position, trying to one-up each other and prove their worth.

Clearly, Punk's guru-style leadership and The New Nexus members' self-determinism do not mesh very well. If Punk makes the mistake of thinking his Nexus cohorts will sheepishly do his bidding the same way his SES flunkies did, he is indeed destined to suffer the same fate as Barrett.

"Honestly, I wasn't even sure if Punk was being serious," said Gabriel. "He just walked in and expected us to follow his every whim. He thought we'd be a bunch of SES drones. Not me."

The Nexus, as well as its offshoots, were created for one reason and one reason only: to infiltrate and utterly ransack WWE. This is a group founded on mayhem and disorder. Its ideal leader is not an individual who will try hard to impose order and discipline. Rather, it must be someone who can properly harness and channel that vicious hunger into something productive, useful, and somewhat, though not completely, controllable.

Wade Barrett learned the hard way that attempting to control The Nexus can have disastrous consequences. While Barrett himself has been outspoken on Smackdown about the mistakes he made while spearheading the group on Raw, Punk seems oblivious.

"My biggest error was riding herd over the others," Barrett explained. "You can't expect a group of talented individuals who are destined for greatness to just stand down and abandon their own goals. Funny, though, it appears Punk is making that same mistake over on Raw now, doesn't it?"

Funny for Barrett, perhaps, but not for The New Nexus. And certainly not for Punk. □

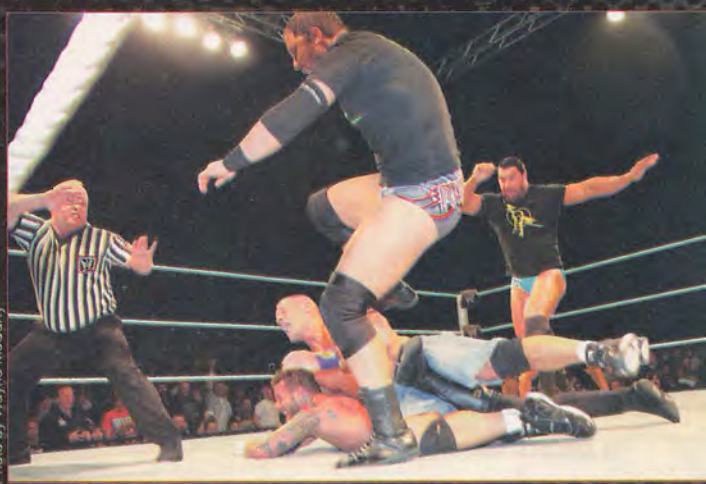
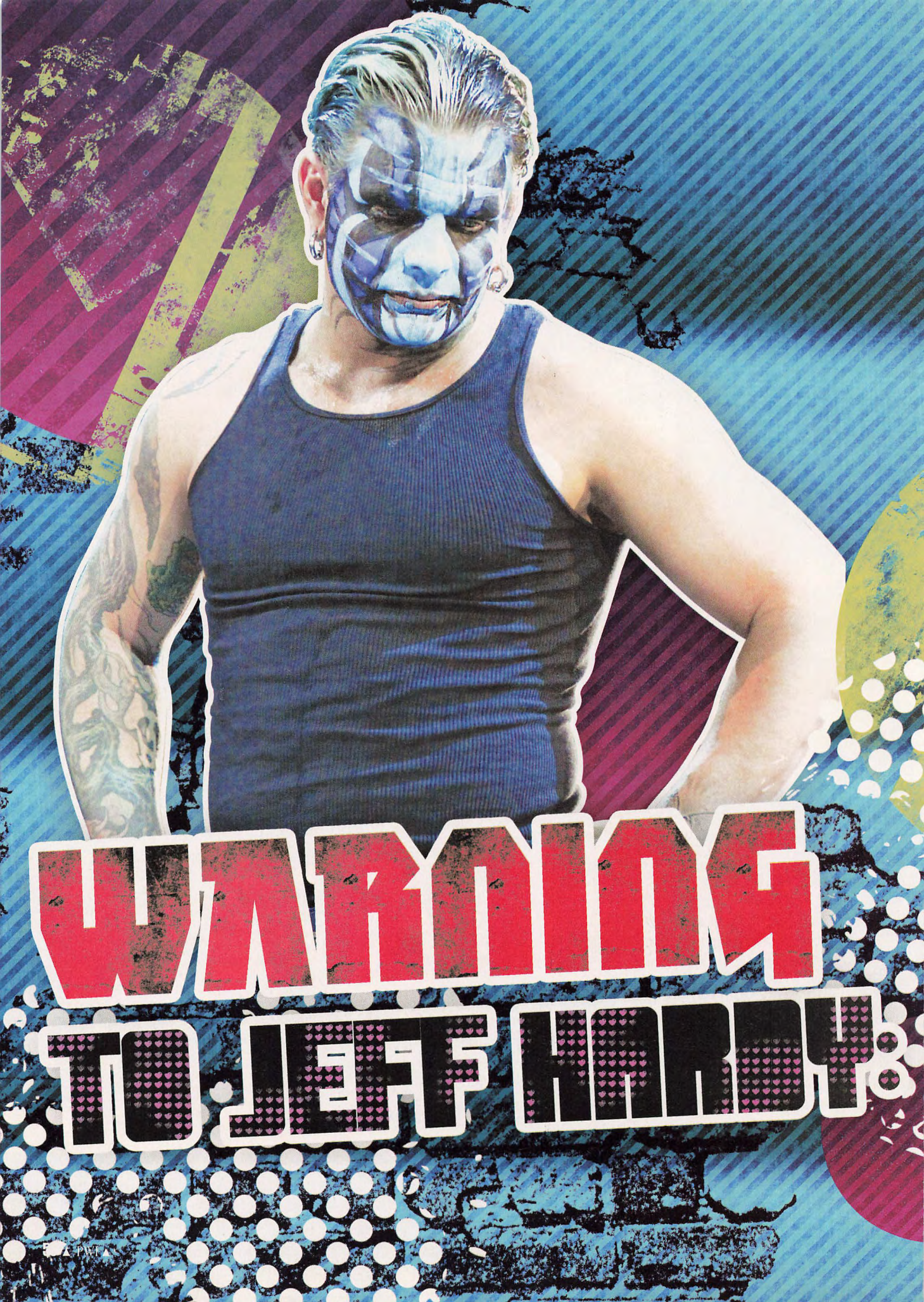
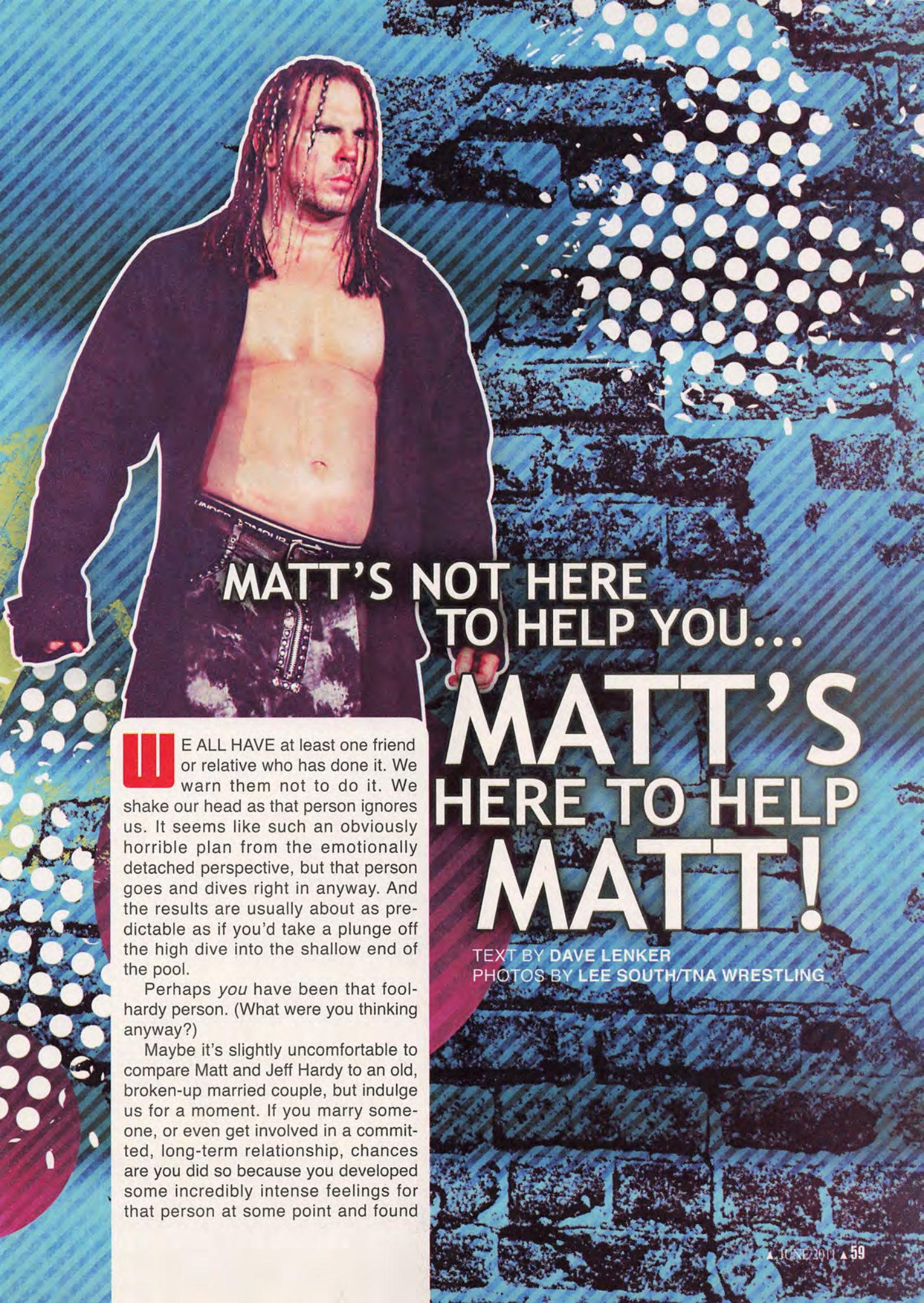


Photo by Wayne McCarty

Sooner or later, the group will tire of bailing out Punk, the same way it grew tired of doing Barrett's bidding. If Punk expects The New Nexus to save his skin against Cena and others, he'll have to get—and stay—in their good graces.


WARNING
TO JEFF HARDY



MATT'S NOT HERE TO HELP YOU...

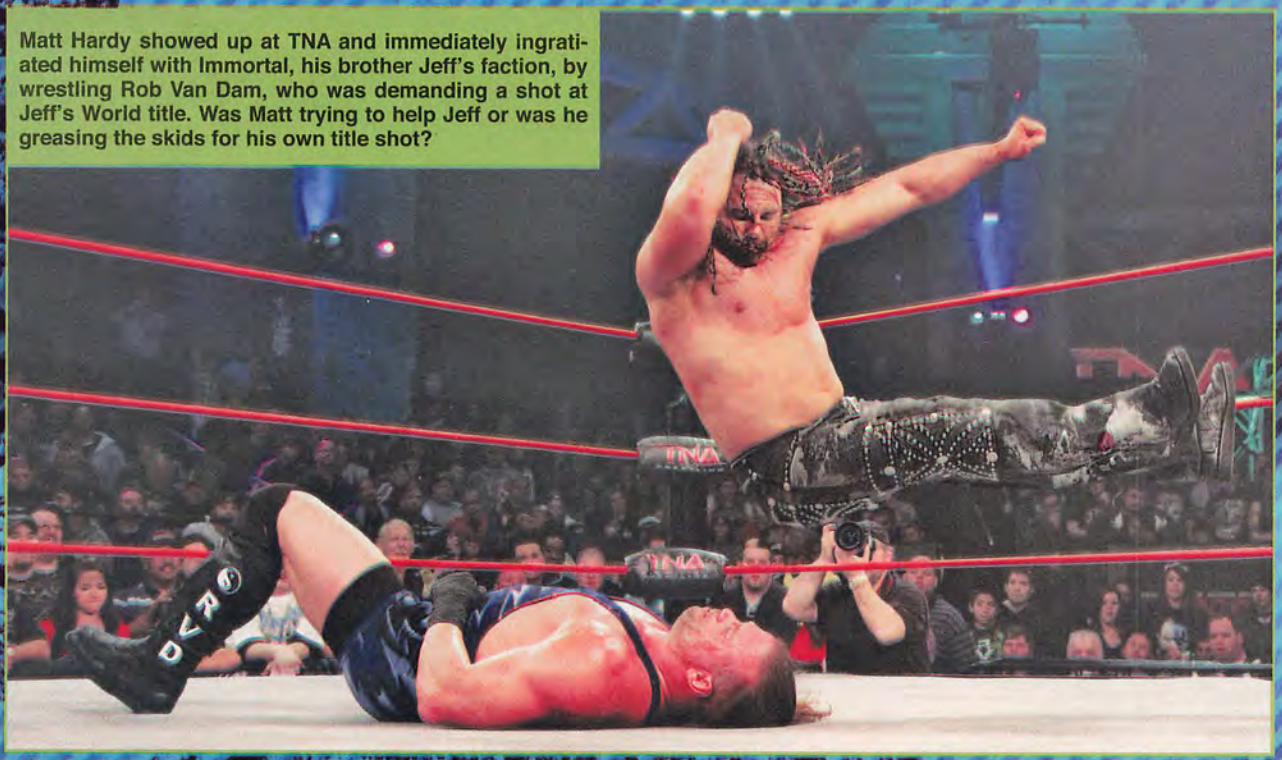
MATT'S HERE TO HELP MATT!

TEXT BY **DAVE LENKER**
PHOTOS BY **LEE SOUTH/TNA WRESTLING**

WE ALL HAVE at least one friend or relative who has done it. We warn them not to do it. We shake our head as that person ignores us. It seems like such an obviously horrible plan from the emotionally detached perspective, but that person goes and dives right in anyway. And the results are usually about as predictable as if you'd take a plunge off the high dive into the shallow end of the pool.

Perhaps *you* have been that foolhardy person. (What were you thinking anyway?)

Maybe it's slightly uncomfortable to compare Matt and Jeff Hardy to an old, broken-up married couple, but indulge us for a moment. If you marry someone, or even get involved in a committed, long-term relationship, chances are you did so because you developed some incredibly intense feelings for that person at some point and found



Matt Hardy showed up at TNA and immediately ingratiated himself with Immortal, his brother Jeff's faction, by wrestling Rob Van Dam, who was demanding a shot at Jeff's World title. Was Matt trying to help Jeff or was he greasing the skids for his own title shot?

some of the things about them to be amazingly wonderful.

If you then divorced or ended it with that person, chances are you did so because you had some major issues that you didn't feel could be overcome. That person probably did you wrong in a major way. But then some time passes, the right situation presents itself, and all of a sudden, the rose-colored glasses come out, and that old flame looks just perfect once again. Maybe, just maybe ...

Too bad those major problems you had were never fixed or even addressed. The wonderful memories flood into your brain and strong-arm all the bad ones out of the way.

We weren't there when Matt and Jeff Hardy made the decision to put perhaps the most beloved tag team of the past 20 years back together (at least semi-regularly) in TNA, but we wonder if they have ever taken a day or at least a few hours to talk things through, to figure out what went wrong, and, most importantly, to come up with a plan to change things for the better in the future.

That's all kind of important if you don't want history to repeat itself.

Or did Jeff, like millions of wrestling fans the world over, simply get swept up in the excitement of a possible reunion of The Hardy Boyz?

We all saw this coming once Matt started making it known how unhappy and unsatisfied he was in WWE through some rather bizarre videos he posted on youtube.com after being sent home from a European tour. The release from WWE he so openly coveted came last October. The next logical move would

Jeff Hardy, shown here wrestling Matt Morgan, was doing fine without his brother in TNA. These days the Hardys have been tagging, but Jeff must be wary of his new partner. History shows that he cannot trust Matt.

be to TNA to hook up with his brother. That happened on January 9 at Genesis, when Matt joined Jeff in Immortal and turned out to be the mystery opponent for Rob Van Dam, whom he defeated. That conveniently prevented RVD from earning a shot at the TNA World title held by Jeff at the time (he would subsequently lose the belt to Mr. Anderson).

Thanks for the help, big brother …

So here we have Jeff as the big star at the top of the card, with Matt playing a lesser role but trying to move up. Where have we seen that before?

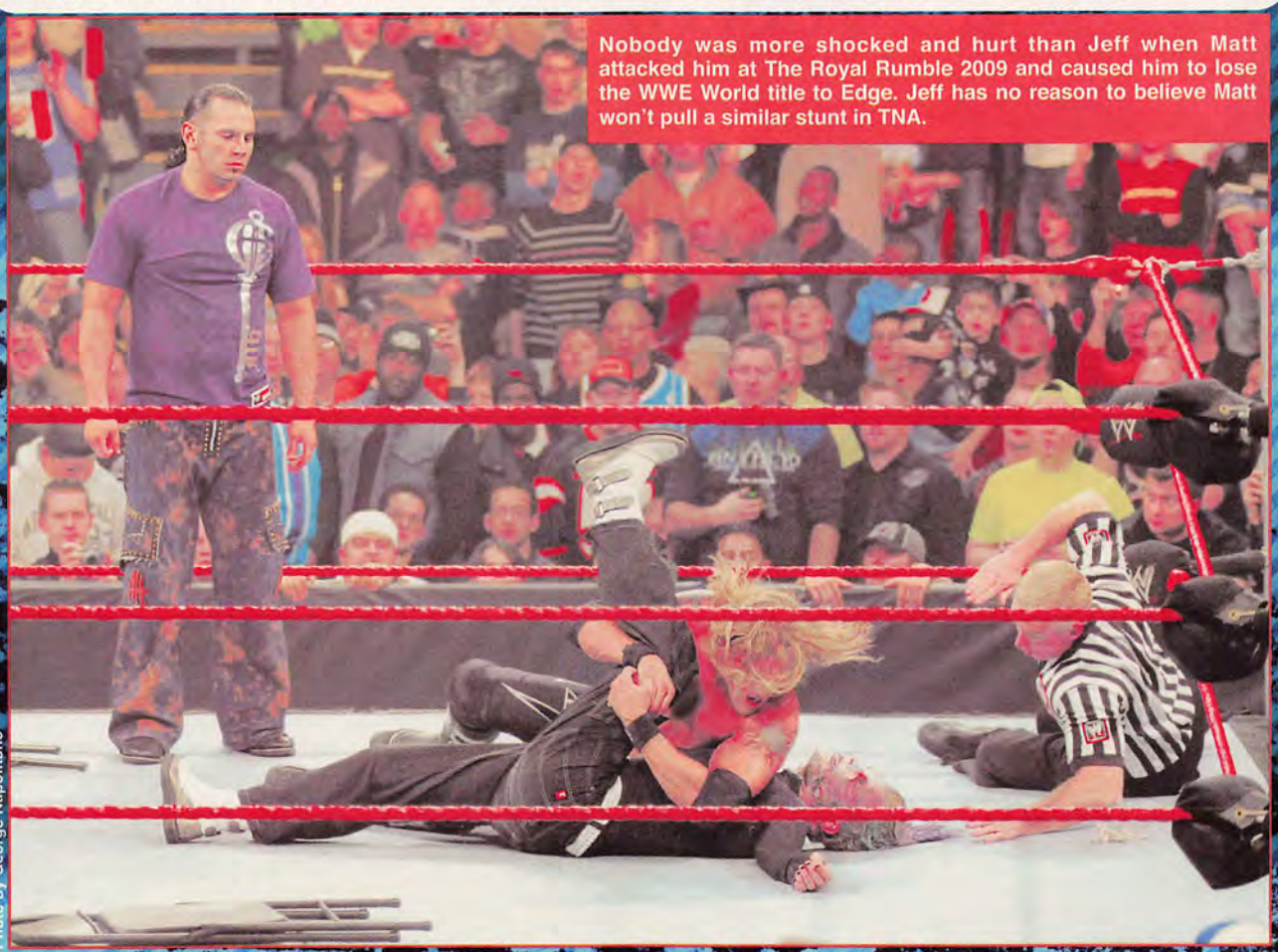
That's right, barely two years ago in WWE, when Matt, frustrated over his loss to Jack Swagger in a rematch for the ECW title early on in the Royal Rumble card, viciously attacked Jeff, causing him to lose the WWE championship to Edge. Soon thereafter, he insinuated that he had been working against Jeff for months in failed attempts to sabotage his career. A very ugly and messy feud ensued, with Jeff finally brutalizing Matt in an "I Quit" match that capped it.

Sure, Matt in effect placed a Band-Aid on his relationship with his brother by apologizing for his actions a few months later and helping Jeff retain the World title, but it's not like that rejuvenated his career. In reality, as much as ever, his career was being defined in relation to what Jeff was accomplishing. After Jeff left WWE for a second stint in TNA, Matt's career stagnated further. Now he, too, is in TNA, again getting a boost from Jeff, as the Boyz are back together, with a triumph over RVD and Anderson in their first TNA bout together.

If it were a one-night-only kind of reunion, it would have been a beautiful thing, even if they were supposed to be the bad guys. Reunions with old loves can work great that way, too. But unless Jeff's legal woes land him behind bars, the plan appears to be to let this play out for a while.

Screwing over Jeff didn't work the first time, but at age 36 now and still without a single world championship on his resume, Matt might just be thinking that going through his brother in one way or another—a violent way would certainly be an option—might just be his express train to the top of TNA. After all, given how disappointingly his career has progressed in the past few years, and that he has a lot to prove to all those who were unnerved by those bizarre videos he posted, he might be just a little desperate.

And yet there stands Jeff, still thinking this could be just like the good ol' days. As strange and even heartbreaking as it might sound, the best advice he could get would be to turn his back on the man who has (almost) always been there for him. □



Nobody was more shocked and hurt than Jeff when Matt attacked him at The Royal Rumble 2009 and caused him to lose the WWE World title to Edge. Jeff has no reason to believe Matt won't pull a similar stunt in TNA.

Photo by George Napolitano

EDGE OF INSANITY!

"The Rated R Superstar's" Mad Rush To Secure His Legacy

TEXT BY **DAN MURPHY**

ON PAPER, 10 world championships, a combined 14 WWE tag team championships, and five Intercontinental championships would appear to be Hall-of-Fame-caliber credentials.

But apparently Edge doesn't want to leave anything to chance.

This summer, Edge will celebrate his 19th year as a professional wrestler. The years have taken their toll. He has broken his neck, torn his ACL, and ripped pectoral muscles. He has been beaten and bloodied, thrown from ladders, slammed through tables, and bounced off of steel cages.

Photo by: George Napolitano

Edge's contract with WWE expires later this year. According to some reports, "The Rated R Superstar" is giving thought to hanging up his boots once that time comes. Even if he opts to re-sign—or continue his career in another promotion—the 37-year-old is certainly closer to the end of his career than the beginning.

As he approaches the tail end of his career, Edge is looking to cement his legacy. He wants to go down in the record books as one of the all-time greats. He yearns to be mentioned in the same company as Hulk Hogan (his childhood hero and former tag team partner), Bret Hart, and The Rock.

But in his mad rush to secure his legacy, Edge is taking a great risk. He has been a fighting champion on the Smackdown brand, defending the championship against the likes of Kane and Dolph Ziggler. He has stood up to Wade Barrett and is braving four-on-one odds against The Corre. He's also moonlighting on the Raw brand, starting a rivalry with WWE champion The Miz as well as Alberto Del Rio.

Simply stated, Edge is taking on too much. He's making too many enemies. He's flirting with disaster.

Perhaps the biggest blemish on Edge's sterling career has been a rash of serious injuries that have kept him sidelined for significant periods of time. He employs a risky style, and his apparent quest to continually prove himself elevates that risk.

"Edge is a very focused and driven competitor, and he's definitely taking on a lot these days," said *Smackdown* announcer Todd Grisham. "It's hard enough to travel back and forth between the Raw and Smackdown shows like Edge has been doing lately, but when you consider the fact that he's wrestling top stars on both brands, you have to wonder how much longer he can maintain that type of pace."

Photo by George Napolitano

During his feud with Dolph Ziggler, Edge was battling the former I-C champ in the ring, and former girlfriend and current Smackdown consultant Vickie Guerrero backstage. Why would the "Rated R Superstar" invite such a headache?

Matches aside, Edge is also antagonizing some dangerous people. He played with fire when he kidnapped Paul Bearer to get a mental edge on Kane. His history with vindictive Smackdown consultant Vickie Guerrero is well-documented. Wade Barrett has demonstrated his willingness to sic his cronies on his enemies at any time. Edge humiliated Miz several times, and Miz (and Alex Riley) would love nothing better than to return the favor. And, after all that, Alberto Del Rio is waiting in the wings. Del Rio's cross arm-breaker could re-tear that pectoral muscle, which could put Edge right back on the DL.

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Edge really asked for trouble when he took Paul Bearer hostage on Smackdown, and fanned the flames by taking Kane's World title. Such risks at this stage of Edge's career are unnecessary.

Edge needs to take his foot off the gas pedal. His frantic rush to secure his legacy is both reckless and unnecessary. Edge is the most decorated wrestler in WWE history. He has headlined WrestleMania, wrestled in (and won) two Matches of the Year, won the King of the Ring tournament, and won the Royal Rumble. He helped revolutionize the ladder match, beat Mick Foley in a hardcore match, and beat Kurt Angle in a hair-vs.-hair match. His credentials are impeccable. He doesn't need to run himself into the ground to be considered one of the all-time greats. His legacy is already secure.

The one accomplishment Edge does lack is a lengthy world title reign. Excluding his current World championship reign, Edge's longest reign was a mere 105 days. His average reign lasted 48 days.

The best way for Edge to prove that he belongs among the pantheon of greats is for him to demonstrate that he can hang on to a world championship for a sustained period of time. Unfortunately, his

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Even before his feud with Ziggler had ended, Edge had decided to stand up to The Corre faction on Smackdown, with disastrous results.

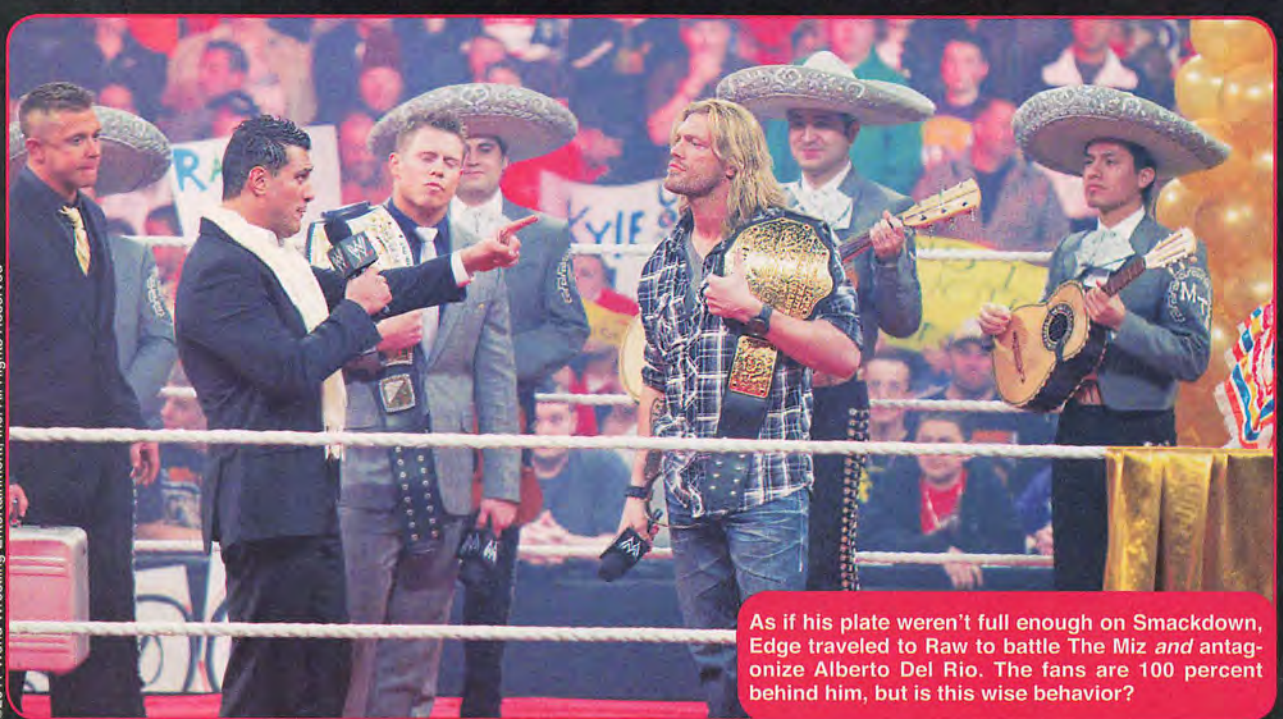
rash behavior is putting his current title reign in jeopardy.

Edge is also putting himself in danger of burnout. His ambitious schedule of title defenses, travel, and appearances can be grinding. Over the past year, Shawn Michaels, Batista, and Chris Jericho all opted to retire from wrestling, in large part because of the rigors of the road and the demanding schedule. Edge is still a young man. If he decides he wants to stick around, he could have up to another 10 years left in him. If he pushes himself too hard, the temptation to step away from the ring might be even greater when his contract does expire. He may be putting a premature end to his career even before he has made a decision on retirement.

"At the end of the day, only Edge can tell if he's taking on too much or stretching himself too thin," said Jericho, who feuded with Edge for a large portion of the past year. "If he feels he can do double-duty on both brands and fight multiple battles on multiple fronts, then more power to him. It's not necessarily the path I would take, though. I think he's certainly taking some major risks, and it wouldn't surprise me if that risky behavior costs him the World title in the near future."

Maybe retirement is still a few years off. Only Edge knows for sure, and he's not talking. The point is, it's his decision to make. But we're concerned that Edge may have that decision made for him, that a serious injury or a case of burnout could end his career prematurely. Edge is so busy chasing greatness that he fails to appreciate everything he has already accomplished.

An 11th—or 12th—world title isn't needed. Nor are a half-dozen feuds all being fought at the same time. Edge is already one of the all-time best. He just needs to understand that and stop trying to prove himself. Otherwise, his legacy may be a career that ended too early. □



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As if his plate weren't full enough on Smackdown, Edge traveled to Raw to battle The Miz *and* antagonize Alberto Del Rio. The fans are 100 percent behind him, but is this wise behavior?

300+ SUPERSTARS! FROM THE MAGIC TO THE TRAGIC ... THE ALL-TIME WRESTLEMANIA ROSTER

Section compiled by **Harry Burkett**

HULK HOGAN BODYSLAMMING Andre the Giant. Razor Ramon climbing the ladder to reach the Intercontinental belt. A bloody Steve Austin refusing to submit to Bret Hart's Sharpshooter. The Undertaker shaking Shawn Michaels' hand after ending his career.

Those are moments of magic in WrestleMania lore.

Mr. T getting booed during his boxing match against Roddy Piper. Bart Gunn taking Butterbean's kayo punch within seconds of the opening bell. Big Bossman hanging from the rafters. Kelly Kelly being on the receiving end of Vickie Guerrero's Cougar Splash.

Those are moments of tragedy for the people on the bad side of those situations.

More than 300 performers have appeared at the past 26 WrestleManias. In this unprecedented compilation, we have featured every WWE talent to step between the ropes, including The Gobbledygooker in the gimmick battle royal at WrestleMania 17. We have highlighted their moments of WrestleMania magic and their moments of tragedy, and tried to give you perspective on their relevance to pro wrestling's premier event. In rare instances where superstars didn't have either a discernable tragic moment or magic moment, we simply put "None." But everyone on our roster has at least one or the other.

And we'll warn you ahead of time. You're going to read a lot about the battle royal at WrestleMania 4, the tag team battle royal at 'Mania 14, the Hardcore title battle royal at 'Mania 15, the gimmick battle royal at 'Mania 17, and the Diva battle royal at 'Mania 25. These battle royals were easy ways for WWE to feature mid-card wrestlers who otherwise wouldn't get a chance to shine in the WrestleMania spotlight. Remember the historic four-way tag match at WrestleMania 20? Honestly, we didn't either, but you'll read a lot about it in the profiles of Rob Conway, Rene Dupree, Garrison Cade, and Mark Jindrak.

Here's one caveat: We did not include the NFL players who participated in the football players/pro wrestlers battle royal at WrestleMania 2. Hey, those guys have their own Super Bowl. They don't need to infringe upon ours. And, for ease of reference, we're using numbers instead of a jumble of Roman numerals. And please keep in mind this section features WrestleManias 1 through 26 only.

Also note that we did not include WrestleMania dark matches, and that the BR designation with a wrestler's record signifies battle royal and is not included in the win-loss record.

We dedicate this section to the superstars who have given their best at the extravaganza known as WrestleMania! Maybe the next time this list is compiled, say five years from now, some of you will be on it!

JOEY ABS (BR)

WM Relevance: Joey was a member of the Mean Street Posse, a not-so-fearsome trio who grew up near Shane McMahon in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Magic Moment: He pinned Posse running buddy Rodney for the WWF hardcore title in a hardcore battle royal at WMX16.

Tragic Moment: His 14 seconds of glory came to an end after Headbanger Thrasher threw him into a closed garage door and pinned him for the belt.

ADRIAN ADONIS (1-1)

WM Relevance: He was a great mid-carder who could make any match work against a quality opponent (Roddy Piper) and a not-so-quality opponent (Uncle Elmer).

Magic Moment: Adonis avoided Elmer's massive kneedrop to score a merciful victory at WM2

Tragic Moment: Piper put Adonis to sleep in a not-so-Adorable Squeeze, and helped Brutus Beefcake shear his bleach-blond locks at WM3.

AGUILA (0-1)

WM Relevance: He brought finesse and speed to an event that was—until that time, at least—better known for clashes of personalities rather than athletes.

Magic Moment: Aguila delivered an Asai moonsault to WWF light heavyweight champion Taka Michinoku outside the ring at WM14.

Tragic Moment: He fell prey to Taka's Michinoku driver minutes later.

AKEBONO (1-0)

WM Relevance: Akebono was in the long tradition of athletes from other sports to appear at a WrestleMania event.

Magic Moment: He pushed The Big Show out of the vaunted circle to win their heavily hyped sumo match.

Tragic Moment: He had to see The Big Show in diapers.

AKEEM/ONE MAN GANG (1-2-BR)

WM Relevance: He proved to be more devastating as a member of The Twin Towers with Big Bossman than as a singles wrestler.

Magic Moment: Akeem and Bossman defeated The Rockers rather easily at WM5.

Tragic Moment: He got himself disqualified in a semifinal match against Randy Savage in the WWF World title tournament at WM4.

ALBERT/A-TRAIN (1-1)

WM Relevance: He was a stock player in a cavalcade of stars.

Magic Moment: A-Train scored a two-count against The Undertaker—thereby coming within a second of ending The Streak—when he and The Big Show faced "The Phenom" at WM19.

Tragic Moment: He was forced to rest in peace when 'Taker executed the Tombstone piledriver later in the bout.

ARN ANDERSON (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Brainbusters appeared only once at 'Mania, but at least they left with a 100 percent winning record.

Magic Moment: He and Tully Blanchard hit a spike piledriver on Tito Santana as Strike Force disintegrated before their eyes at WM5.

Tragic Moment: "The Enforcer" nearly saddled The Brainbusters with a humiliating WM loss when Rick Martel snared him in the Boston crab.

ANDRE THE GIANT (1-2-1-BR)

WM Relevance: It's only fitting that the WWF's biggest legend was a staple of the first five WrestleManias.

Magic Moment: The Hart Foundation outnumbered Andre two to one, but the 7'4" behemoth sent Jim Neidhart soaring out of the ring with a big boot and then he tossed future Hall of Famer Bret Hart over the ropes and onto his partner to score a battle royal victory at WM2.

Tragic Moment: Andre could have retired as a beloved figure with his undefeated record intact in the WWF. Instead, Andre let resentment get the better of him, and WWF champ Hulk Hogan humbled him at WM3.

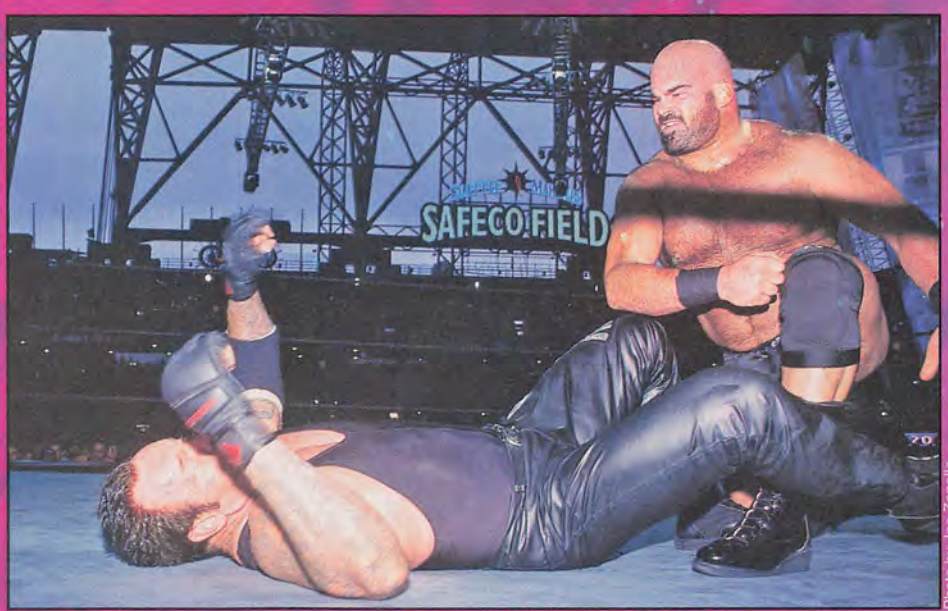


Photo by Joe Zanolle

A-Train has a fleeting moment against 'Taker at WM19

KURT ANGLE (3-5)

WM Relevance: In last year's "WrestleMania 100," we ranked Angle as the third-greatest performer in the history of the event—just behind The Undertaker and Steve Austin. Enough said.

Magic Moment: Fans never guessed that Angle had only 75 percent feeling in his left arm, but still gave the Olympian a standing ovation after he lost the WWE title to Brock Lesnar at WM19. Yes, that was a more magical moment than his greatest 'Mania victories.

Tragic Moment: Angle lost the WWF European title to Chris Jericho only a few minutes after losing the Intercontinental belt to Chris Benoit in a two-out-of-three-falls bout for his European and I-C straps.

Austin proves his mettle at WM13

ANIMAL (2-0-BR)

WM Relevance: While Animal and Hawk were dominant in their 'Mania outings, even winning a tag team battle royal at WM14, they probably had less of an impact on the event than their chief impostors, Demolition.

Magic Moment: The Legion of Doom steamrolled Hercules and Paul Roma in less than a minute at their first WrestleMania, WM7 So much for Power & Glory!

Tragic Moment: None.

TED ARCIDI (BR)

WM Relevance: Arcidi proved that only wrestlers—not hulked-up powerlifters—could be truly successful at WrestleMania.

Magic Moment: He got to show off his new tennis shoes at WM2.

Tragic Moment: Hillbilly Jim threw him over the top rope. Arcidi learned to "not go messin' with a country boy!"

TONY ATLAS (BR)

WM Relevance: The fact that Atlas was the fifth man eliminated at WM2's battle royal featuring both wrestlers and football players demonstrated where his career was headed at that point.

Magic Moment: Maybe at least one camera-bulb flash caught "Mr. USA" as he sailed over the top rope.

Tragic Moment: Atlas was eliminated by William "Refrigerator" Perry—*ouch!*

STEVE AUSTIN (5-2)

WM Relevance: His overall impact on WrestleMania is second only to that of The Undertaker.

Magic Moment: The image of a bloody Austin refusing to submit to Bret Hart's Sharpshooter at WM13 came to symbolize the Attitude Era and transformed "Stone-Cold" into the WWF's most popular stars. He won more by losing that night.

Tragic Moment: Austin was trying to do the right thing by passing the WWF World title—and the torch—to The Rock at WM19. But it was merely the conclusion of a largely criticized heel run for Austin.

AX (3-0)

WM Relevance: Demolition was ranked number two—after Edge and Christian—among the top tag teams in 'Mania history in last year's "WrestleMania 100" special section. The Legion of Doom was number 10. Take *that*, LOD!

Magic Moment: WWF tag champs Demolition emerged from The Road Warriors' shadow at WM5, becoming huge fan favorites in their own right and knocking off the Roadies' former rivals The Powers of Pain (along with Mr. Fuji) in a three-on-two match.

Tragic Moment: None.

BOB BACKLUND (0-2)

WM Relevance: The man who ruled Vince McMahon Sr.'s WWF for nearly six years was relegated to near joke status during Vince McMahon Jr.'s WrestleMania era. Hart tried to give him some dignity at WM11, but he deserved more than that.

Magic Moment: For a few moments, it looked as if Backlund's crossface chicken wing was about to force Bret Hart to submit in their "I Quit" match at WM11. Hart dispelled the magic by escaping shortly thereafter.

Tragic Moment: Razor Ramon (Scott Hall) pinned Backlund in a glorified preliminary match at WM9.

THE BARBARIAN (1-2)

WM Relevance: He triumphed over Tito Santana in his one singles match, but lost when he teamed with The Warlord and Haku in his other 'Mania appearances.

Magic Moment: Barbarian nearly decapitated Santana with a wicked clothesline off the top rope in a singles bout at WM6.

Tragic Moment: The Barbarian and The Warlord had built their careers on claiming to be better than The Road Warriors, but they—along with manager Mr. Fuji—failed to defeat WWF tag champs Demolition at WM5, proving they couldn't even beat Road Warrior impostors!

DANNY BASHAM (0-1)

WM Relevance: He proved that a young man with a dream could captivate a crowd—even if for only a couple of minutes—on the biggest show of them all..

Magic Moment: Danny did a particularly good job of cutting the ring in half and working over Scotty Too Hotty during Rikishi and Scotty's WWE tag team title defense against The Basham Brothers, The APA, and The World's Greatest Tag Team at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Rikishi sat on Danny to score the pinfall for his team.

DOUG BASHAM (0-1)

WM Relevance: Basham helped proved that eight men working hard can please a tough New York crowd.

Magic Moment: He and Danny Basham executed a beautiful double-suplex on Scotty Too Hotty during Scotty and Rikishi's four-way WWE tag team title defense at WM20.

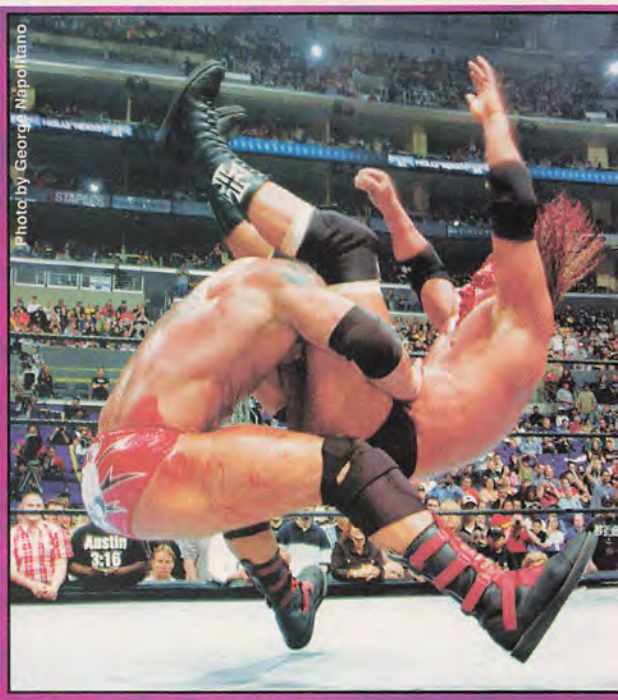
Tragic Moment: Bradshaw used a fall-away slam on Basham to send him out of the ring and destroy the any chance they Bashams had of winning the gold.

BATISTA (2-1)

WM Relevance: "The Animal" peaked sooner than future main-eventers John Cena and Randy Orton, and, for that reason, WM21 belonged to him.

Magic Moment: Batista executing a thunderous, monstrous, momentous power bomb on World champ Triple-H was the image of WM21.

Tragic Moment: He didn't know what to do after The Undertaker kicked out of his Batista Bomb at WM23. Flustered, he hesitated when he attempted a second Batista Bomb, and the wily 'Taker escaped, slammed him in the corner, made him just another victim of the Tombstone piledriver, and took his precious World title.



The Batista Bomb does in HHH

BRUTUS BEEFCAKE (2-2-2)

WM Relevance: Beefcake usually rose to the occasion at 'Mania, whether as Adrian Adonis' barber or donning a protective mask and teaming with Hulk Hogan in the comeback of his life.

Magic Moment: Hulk Hogan had been the only man to defeat Curt Hennig since "Mr. Perfect" arrived in the WWF. Hennig had removed a turnbuckle pad in desperation, and Beefcake slingshotted him into it and scored one of his biggest wins.

Tragic Moment: The British Bulldogs had been nipping at The Dream Team's heels for eight months. But their luck ran out at WM2 in a heartbreaker.

BRIE BELLA (BR)

WM Relevance: The Bella Twins showed potential as a tag team for the first time at the WM25 Diva battle royal.

Magic Moment: Brie and Nikki were a double-teaming force, eliminating five Divas altogether.

Tragic Moment: She was eliminated by Beth Phoenix.

NIKKI BELLA (BR)

WM Relevance: Nikki and Brie's finest performance was at WM—how appropriate.

Magic Moment: The Bella Twins eliminated five Divas, second only to Beth Phoenix' astounding 12 eliminations.

Tragic Moment: Phoenix eliminated Nikki immediately after she sent Brie over the top rope.

BAM BAM BIGELOW (1-2)

WM Relevance: Bigelow shoving former New York Giant Lawrence Taylor at the 1995 Royal Rumble put the WWF on sports pages worldwide and was primarily responsible for the success of WM11.

Magic Moment: Vince McMahon showing him the newspaper clips and telling him he did well.

Tragic Moment: Bigelow gloated way too long after delivering a moonsault and L.T. ducked a mistimed spinning kick to rebound and hit BBB with a flying forearm to score the pinfall.

Bossman momentarily had Hennig just where he wanted him

RON BASS (BR)

WM Relevance: Bass' brief and unsuccessful performance at WM4 was more humiliating than having someone put a saddle on him and ride him around the ring.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Bass' WrestleMania moment was fleeting, as Junkyard Dog dumped him over the top rope during a 20-man battle royal at WM4.

SHELTON BENJAMIN (1-5)

WM Relevance: Some insiders still insist that Benjamin was a tragic underachiever during his WWE career. That was symbolized by his three Money in the Bank losses.

Magic Moment: Benjamin and Charlie Haas' WWE tag team title victory against the team of Chris Benoit and Rhyno and Los Guerreros at WM19—with Benjamin scoring the win by pinning Chavo Jr.

Tragic Moment: The "Gold Standard" climbed a 20-foot ladder to deliver a beautiful somersault dive onto the other six men involved in the Money in the Bank ladder match at WM25—only to be outdone by Hornswoggle doing a tadpole splash off a three-foot stepladder.

CHRIS BENOIT (3-4)

WM Relevance: At the 20th anniversary of WrestleMania, Benoit represented the very best in the sport, in terms of personal character and ring excellence. Three years later, the Benoit family tragedy would destroy his reputation forever.

Magic Moment: Confetti fell from the ceiling and tears streamed down Benoit's face as he hugged the World title belt and embraced wife Nancy and son Daniel at WM20. He had reached the pinnacle after 18 years in the business.

Tragic Moment: John Bradshaw Layfield rolled up Benoit for a three-count, holding the middle rope for leverage at WM22.

BIG BOSSMAN (5-1)

WM Relevance: The career midcarder had a surprisingly good win-loss record at 'Mania. Damn that Undertaker!

Magic Moment: Big Bossman was on the verge of his biggest win ever as Intercontinental champ Curt Hennig lay on the mat at WM7. The crowd roared when Andre the Giant nailed "Mr. Perfect" with the I-C belt, but a timely run-in by The Barbarian and Haku saved Hennig's title.

Tragic Moment: The macabre spectacle of The Undertaker using a noose to hang Bossman from the rafters at WM15 is still disturbing to watch.

THE BIG SHOW (2-8)

WM Relevance: The Big Show has *always* failed miserably in singles outings at 'Mania, but he's had much better luck in tag team competition, with Kane at WM22 and The Miz at WM26.

Magic Moment: World tag champs The Big Show and Kane were in the midst of a six-month reign, and it was no surprise when they steamrolled Chris Masters and Carlito at WM22.

Tragic Moment: There's no shame in being punched out by Floyd Mayweather. But there is a lot of shame in wearing a diaper to face Akebono in a groaner of a sumo match.

STEVE BLACKMAN (0-1)

WM Relevance: Blackman handled nunchakus and kendo sticks with deadly precision, but he couldn't grab the attention of a WrestleMania crowd.

Magic Moment: He and Al Snow attacked their midget mascot, Chester McCheesington, after losing to Test and Albert at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Blackman was on the wrong end of Test's elbow-drop off the top rope. So much for his WrestleMania glory.

ELI BLU (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: The Blu Brothers and Uncle Zebekiah were the obligatory hillbilly offering at WM11, continuing a long tradition that included Hillbilly Jim, Uncle Elmer, and The Godwinns.

Magic Moment: Eli exploited the fact that he and Jacob were identical twins and pulled several switcheroos on Lex Luger and Davey Boy Smith at WM11. It was entertaining for a few seconds.

Tragic Moment: He took Luger's running forearm right in the mouth and was unable to recover.

JACOB BLU (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: The Blu Brothers appeared at 'Mania twice, first in a tag team match at WM11 and again—as The Disciples of the Apocalypse—in a tag team battle royal at WM4.

Magic Moment: The Allied Powers were out to prove themselves against The Blu Brothers in the opening bout of WM11 and Davey Boy Smith started very aggressively, only to have Jacob catch him with a running bulldog.

Tragic Moment: He fell victim to Smith's sunset flip to lose the match for his team.

B. BRIAN BLAIR (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Blair teamed with Jim Brunzell at WM3, and the two were allies in battle royals at WM2 and WM4.

Magic Moment: The Killer Bees lost to Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik when their friend, Jim Duggan, smacked Sheik with his trusty 2x4. The magic kicked in when Blair and Brunzell celebrated with "Hacksaw" after the match.

Tragic Moment: Blair's early elimination from the 20-man battle royal at WM4.

TULLY BLANCHARD (1-0)

WM Relevance: Blanchard and Anderson dominated Starrcade and the Great American Bash, but they simply didn't make the same impact at WrestleMania.

Magic Moment: At WM5, Anderson had Tito Santana trapped in a piledriver position when Blanchard leaped off the top rope, driving Santana's head into the canvas.

Tragic Moment: Rick Martel left the ring and abandoned Santana toward the end of the match, which begs the eternal question: If Martel had stayed, could The Brainbusters have really defeated them?

ALUNDRA BLAYZE (1-0)

WM Relevance: Her appearance at WM10 did not foreshadow a rebirth in women's wrestling. It would take a nearly decade for that to happen.

Magic Moment: History repeated itself at WM10, as Alundra Blayze (Madusa) defeated Lelani Kai for the WWF Women's title—just as Wendi Richter had done to Lelani Kai at WMI.

Tragic Moment: None.

ADAM BOMB (0-1)

WM Relevance: If nothing else, his manager, Harvey Wippleman, did provide some comic relief by picking a fight with ring announcer Howard Finkel at WM10.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: The popular Earthquake attacked Bomb at the outset, delivered his trademark splash, and pinned him in only 32 seconds. It seemed that Bomb had the right surname.

BOOKER T (1-4)

WM Relevance: Booker T's talent was usually squandered at WrestleMania, as evidenced by his fight with Edge over a Japanese shampoo commercial at WM18.

Magic Moment: World champ Triple-H claimed Booker T wasn't in his league and targeted his challenger's left knee at WM19. Booker, with his hometown fans at Houston's Reliant Astrodome behind him, refused to submit, although his leg could no longer support his weight. Only Ric Flair's interference saved Triple-H that night.

Tragic Moment: Three years later, Booker was relegated to teaming with wife Sharmell in a handicap match against The Boogeyman.

THE BOOGEYMAN (1-0)

WM Relevance: Fate spoiled the one and only in-ring 'Mania appearance of The Boogeyman, who suffered a torn left biceps at a house show shortly before WM22.

Magic Moment: Boogeyman executed a tree-slam on five-time WCW World champion Booker T to score the upset victory in only 3:52.

Tragic Moment: Only a minute earlier, Boogey had scooped a handful of worms into his mouth and planted a very wet and slimy kiss on Booker's wife Sharmell.

MATT BORNE (0-1)

WM Relevance: Borne was destined to become a vanishing breed as WrestleMania would soon have no more use for preliminary wrestlers.

Magic Moment: The second-generation star surprised Rick Steamboat with an excellent belly-to-belly suplex at WM1.

Tragic Moment: He inexplicably staggered toward Steamboat who unfurled a majestic flying cross-bodyblock and scored the pinfall.

Photo by George Napolitano

Booker T staggers Triple-H

EVAN BOURNE (0-1)

WM Relevance: Bourne's inclusion in the Money in the Bank ladder match at WM26 ensured some aerodynamic excitement among the crowded field of 10.

Magic Moment: Jack Swagger had used a ladder as a battering ram during the MITB ladder match, and Bourne stopped the carnage by taking him out with an Air Bourne double-knee strike.

Tragic Moment: Bourne was oh-so-close to the hanging MITB briefcase when he opted to launch a 450-splash from a ladder balanced horizontally from the ring ropes to a standing ladder.

DINO BRAVO (1-2)

WM Relevance: Vince McMahon viewed Bravo as important to his plans to secure Montreal as a WWF stronghold, and that almost guaranteed that "Canada's Strongest Man" would always turn in a powerful performance.

Magic Moment: Bravo flattened former NWA World champion Ron Garvin with a side suplex to earn a devastating win at WM5.

Tragic Moment: He joined Greg Valentine in administering a beatdown to Brutus Beefcake at WrestleMania 3, thereby making Beefcake a major fan favorite.

BROTHER LOVE (BR)

WM Relevance: We'd like to say he provided 'Mania with comic relief. But we have to admit that he was just plain obnoxious.

Magic Moment: Brother Love was never an in-ring competitor, but—inexplicably—there he was in the gimmick battle royal at WM17, though briefly.

Tragic Moment: Roddy Piper hosed him at WM5 with a fire extinguisher in a segment—which included shock talk show host Morton Downey Jr.—that was awful.

BAD NEWS BROWN (0-0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: His WrestleMania 4 battle royal victory will always be in the records.

Magic Moment: Brown surprised Bret Hart with a Ghetto Blaster kick to the head to win the star-studded battle royal at WM4.

Tragic Moment: Roddy Piper displayed bad taste in painting half of his body black for his showdown with Brown at WM6. Brown had to suffer that humiliation and failed to beat Piper. They fought to a double-countout.

D-LO BROWN (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: His impact on WrestleMania mirrored his impact on WWE. Brown was a good hand for opening bouts and even the occasional mid-card push, but he would not be an enduring star.

Magic Moment: D-Lo got the big-time rub when Ice T accompanied him and The Godfather in the opening bout against Big Bossman and Bull Buchanan at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Bossman and Buchanan survived an early onslaught to administer a methodical beatdown to Brown and Godfather.

Bundy nearly altered history

JIM BRUNZELL (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Overshadowed by fellow fan favorites The British Bulldogs, The Killer Bees' careers were on the wane by the time WrestleMania 4 rolled around.

Magic Moment: Brunzell was known for having the best dropkick in the business and he got to prove that by nailing Nikolai Volkoff square on the chin in front of 93,173 fans at WM3.

Tragic Moment: He was the sixth man eliminated from the 20-man battle royal at WM4, thanks to Jacques Rougeau.

BULL BUCHANAN (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: He turned out to be quite the tag team specialist, yet he was most effective with mentor Big Bossman.

Magic Moment: Buchanan and Bossman rode his bicycle kick to victory at WM16, where they soundly defeated D-Lo Brown and The Godfather.

Tragic Moment: He failed to gain success as Recon—with partner Sniper—in the tag team battle royal at WM14.

KING KONG BUNDY (1-3)

WM Relevance: He was WWF World champ Hulk Hogan's first monster challenger at WM2.

Magic Moment: Bundy delivered his Atlantic City Avalanche onto Hulk Hogan in the corner and then delivered his trademark splash. It seemed the WWF World title was his. But that was before Hogan "hulked up" and Bundy felt the power of "Hulkamania!"

Tragic Moment: The 446-pound behemoth actually delivered a flying elbowsmash to midget wrestler Little Beaver in a mixed tag team match at WM3.

KATIE LEA BURCHILL (BR)

WM Relevance: Even without Paul Burchill overshadowing her, she failed to have a standout moment at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: She was still in the ring with only nine Divas remaining.

Tragic Moment: Katie Lea was eliminated by Beth Phoenix.

ELIJAH BURKE (0-1)

WM Relevance: The present-day D'Angelo Dinero displayed lots of potential but not much relevance during his WWE stint.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He led ECW's New Breed faction—also comprised of Marcus Cor Von, Matt Striker, and Kevin Thorn—to disastrous defeat against the ECW Originals—Rob Van Dam, Tommy Dreamer, Sabu, and The Sandman—at WM23.

BUTTERBEAN (1-0)

WM Relevance: The former boxer knocked out all of the WWF's credibility with one punch, showing up the entire sport.

Magic Moment: Butterbean needed only 32 seconds to knock out "Brawl For All" winner Bart Gunn at WM15. It might have been the most lopsided performance in 'Mania history.

Tragic Moment: None.

GARRISON CADE (0-1)

WM Relevance: Following Cade's death last year, we'll never know his true potential at WrestleMania or in life.

Magic Moment: None.

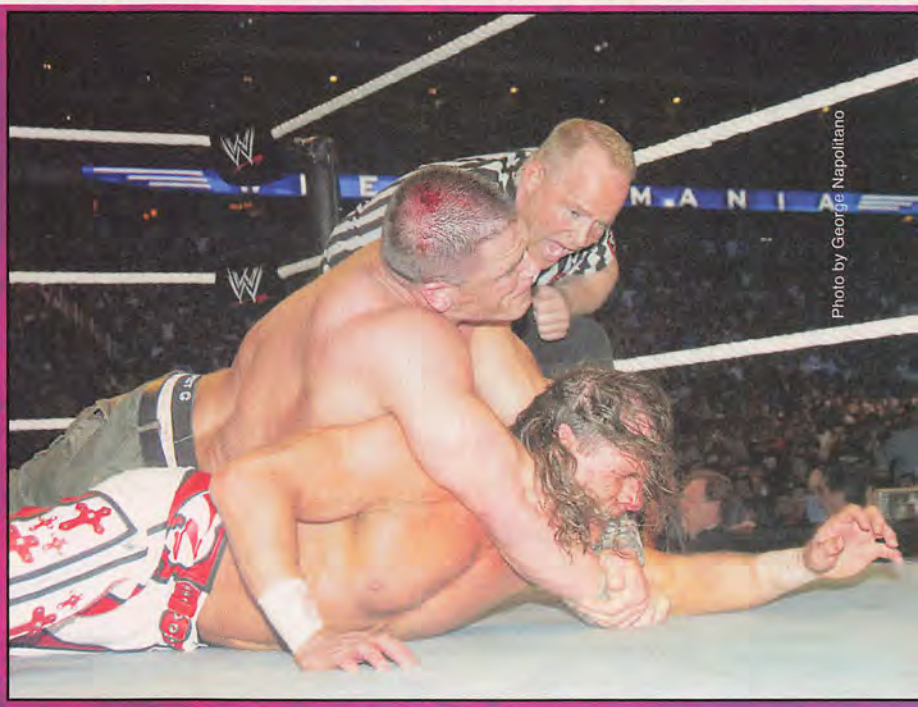
Tragic Moment: Cade was lost in the WrestleMania shuffle, plugged in a four-way tag team match at WM20, where he and Mark Jindrak faced The Dudley Boyz, La Resistance, and World tag champs Rob Van Dam and Booker T.

CHRIS CANDIDO (1-0)

WM Relevance: Candido provided a straightforward tag team title change at WrestleMania. That was in the days before tag belts were buried in four-way affairs.

Magic Moment: His girlfriend and valet, Sunny, flashed her derriere at WM12. And, oh, yeah, that also helped Skip pin Phineas Godwinn to win the WWF World tag team title for The Bodydonnas.

Tragic Moment: Henry Godwinn didn't shower for two weeks prior to that match.



Cena forces a submission from HBK

CARLITO (0-2)

WM Relevance: Unfortunately, Carlito made all his meaningful contributions during dark matches.

Magic Moment: Carlito and Primo Colon unified their WWE tag team title with John Morrison and The Miz' World tag team championship in an incredibly historic match.

Tragic Moment: Partner Chris Masters unintentionally attacked him while they were being steamrolled by World tag champs The Big Show and Kane at WM22.

JESUS CASTILLO (BR)

WM Relevance: WWF Creative put all former WWC and IWA Puerto Rico stars in Los Boricuas during the faction-heavy Attitude era.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He and Los Boricuas stablemate Jose Estrada Jr. didn't have much of a chance in the 15-team tag team battle royal at WM14. No one could stand in the way of The Legion of Doom's final moment of triumph.

JOHN CENA (6-1)

WM Relevance: He is part of a very elite group also comprised of The Undertaker, Steve Austin, and Hulk Hogan, all of whom have won three world titles at 'Mania. He's bound to hold the all-time record someday.

Magic Moment: Cena successfully defended his World title against childhood hero Shawn Michaels by forcing him into submission with the STF at WM23. It doesn't get any better than that.

Tragic Moment: He made the unforgivable mistake of going for the Attitude Adjustment too early, with Triple-H escaping and executing the Pedigree on Cena at WM24. Randy Orton punted Triple-H in the head, enabling him to keep the WWE title in this three-way match.

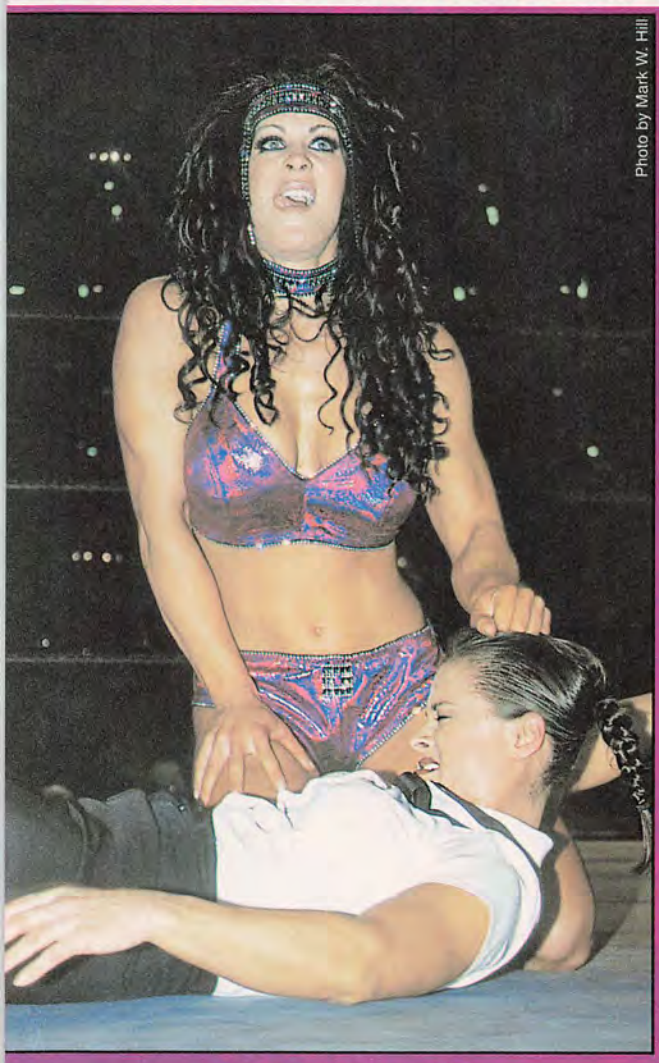


Photo by Mark W. Hill

Chyna has her way with Ivory

CHAINZ (BR)

WM Relevance: Chainz (Brian Lee) didn't make an impact on 'Mania, but, hey, it was better than Tommy Dreamer sending him through a stack of tables in ECW.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Chainz was put in a hastily arranged tag team with Bradshaw, but their intense brawling didn't carry them to success in a tag team battle royal chock-full of the greatest street-fighters in WWF history.

CHRISTIAN (3-1)

WM Relevance: Although Christian was a terrific singles heel, his real contribution to 'Mania was his partnership with Edge. Together, E&C made TLC a household acronym.

Magic Moment: It would make any heel—or any red-blooded male—salivate. Christian managed to turn Trish Stratus against Chris Jericho, and the result was Christian scoring an upset win over Y2J at WM20. Plus, Christian and Trish sealed it with a kiss.

Tragic Moment: He lost to new mentor Dallas Page at WM18. Christian didn't know what was worse: Page raising the European belt after the match or flashing those pearly-whites yet again.

BRIAN CHRISTOPHER (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: An impromptu teaming with Scott Taylor changed the fortunes of the son of Jerry Lawler and provided at least one 'Mania moment.

Magic Moment: Grandmaster Sexay maintained plenty of offense against Eddie Guerrero, Dean Malenko, and Perry Saturn at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Christopher and Scott Taylor (Scotty 2 Hotty) teamed for the first time during the tag team battle royal at WM14, but quick eliminations to both proved to be Too Much.

CHYNA (2-0)

WM Relevance: WrestleMania was very good to Chyna, with the "Ninth Wonder Of The World" even winning the WWF Women's title at WM17.

Magic Moment: Grandmaster Sexay and Scotty 2 Hotty were fighting toe-to-toe with The Radicalz, but it wasn't until Too Much's partner, Chyna, entered the fray that the dynamic changed. After a press slam, power bomb, and sleeper slam, she pinned Guerrero.

Tragic Moment: She ripped her leather pants and it was all she could do to keep them up during the fracas. Talk about a WrestleMania moment!

ROBERT CONWAY (0-1)

WM Relevance: The faux Frenchman did virtually nothing to establish himself or La Resistance in the annals of WrestleMania.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He and Sylvan Grenier faced The Dudley Boyz, Garrison Cade and Mark Jindrak, and World tag champs Rob Van Dam and Booker T. So that meant the odds were 7-1 that he would be the one pinned.

JIM CORNETTE (BR)

WM Relevance: Cornette's true relevance was felt as manager of Yokozuna and later The New Midnight Express—and certainly not as an in-ring competitor.

Magic Moment: He was thrilled when his charge, WWF World champion Yokozuna, got a cheap DQ victory over Lex Luger at WM10. Cornette's euphoria wouldn't last long, however, as Yoko lost the belt to Bret Hart by the end of the night.

Tragic Moment: That occurred when he found out Cpl. Kirschner had gone AWOL and that he was needed to take his spot in the gimmick battle royal at WM20.

MARCUS COR VON (0-1)

WM Relevance: He never got to show the full Monty at WrestkIMania.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He was lost in the shuffle at WM23, one of ECW's New Breed who went down in defeat to the ECW Originals.

CRUSH (0-3)

WM Relevance: His various incarnations at 'Mania—as a member of Demolition, a thrilling babyface, a backstabbing heel, and a biker dude in the Nation of Domination—proved he was a versatile performer. Rest in peace, Brian Adams.

Magic Moment: Crush countered Randy Savage's pre-match attack at WM10 with a vicious tilt-a-whirl backbreaker followed by a drop across the guardrail.

Tragic Moment: He almost beat Doink the Clown at WM9, but a second Doink (Steve Keirn) suddenly appeared and knocked out Crush with a prosthetic arm. This was pathetically tragic.

DANNY DAVIS (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Davis was the crooked referee who helped The Hart Foundation beat The British Bulldogs for the WWF World tag team title in 1987, so fans wanted to see him get his comeuppance. It really didn't happen.

Magic Moment: He used manager Jimmy Hart's megaphone to smash Davey Boy Smith in the head and lead his partners, Bret Hart and Jim Neidhart, to victory over Smith, Dynamite Kid, and Tito Santana at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Davis had another magic moment of sorts when he eliminated Sam Houston at the 43-second mark of the WM4 battle royal.

TED DiBIASE JR. (0-1)

WM Relevance: His three-way match against Randy Orton and Cody Rhodes should've been his breakout moment. Instead, he was portrayed as an untalented stooge.

Magic Moment: He had a fleeting moment of glory during his three-way against Orton and Rhodes at WM26 when he used two vintage DiBiase clotheslines to knock "The Viper" off his game.

Tragic Moment: He spent too much time arguing with his ally, Rhodes, and ended up receiving Orton's RKO.

TED DiBIASE SR. (4-3-1)

WM Relevance: The "Million-Dollar Man" offered the perfect blend of personality and in-ring skill and usually came through with the best match of the show during his eight 'Mania appearances.

Magic Moment: He defeated Jim Duggan and Don Muraco en route to facing Randy Savage in the final of the WWF World title tournament at WM4. DiBiase proved that he had even more talent than money.

Tragic Moment: DiBiase's manservant Virgil grew tired of his employer's overbearing antics and rebelled against him, leading to a showdown at WM7. Roddy Piper interfered on Virgil's behalf, causing DiBiase to be counted out.

DIESEL (1-1)

WM Relevance: Despite his limitations, Kevin Nash always had a main-event presence.

Magic Moment: The picture-perfect image from WM11 was Diesel walking to the back with Jenny McCarthy *and* Pamela Anderson after he turned back the challenge of Shawn Michaels.

Tragic Moment: It was almost a foregone conclusion that Diesel would become 'Mania fodder after he told Vince McMahon he would be heading to WCW. That explains why he became just another victim of The Undertaker at WM12.

DINK (0-1)

WM Relevance: Dink, the mini-version of Doink the Clown, was portrayed by Claude Giroux, best known as Tiger Jackson. He added some levity to an event that was starting to become a bit too serious.

Magic Moment: The fans were delighted as he embarrassed a horrified Luna Vachon with his clownish antics during a match pitting him and Doink vs. Luna and Bam Bam Bigelow at WM10.

Tragic Moment: The fun and games ended when Bigelow pinned Doink.

DOINK (1-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Doink has come to symbolize WWE—and WrestleMania—at its lowest creative ebb.

Magic Moment: He needed the help of a Doink clone and a prosthetic arm, but he got the job done against Crush at WM9.

Tragic Moment: The evil clown became a happy clown by the time WM10 rolled around—and he suffered a pinfall loss to Bam Bam Bigelow during a mixed tag team match also involving his mini-protégé Dink and Luna Vachon.

DiBiase Sr. received a bye into the World title tourney after beating Don Muraco

TOMMY DREAMER (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: It's incredible to think that Dreamer appeared at 'Mania only twice during his nine years in WWE, and one of those appearances was in the obscurity of a 24-man inter-promotional battle royal at WM24.

Magic Moment: Dreamer was being quadruple-teamed during an eight-man tag team match at WM23 when he fought back, executing a neckbreaker on Elijah Burke and a DDT on Marcus Cor Von, earning a once-in-a-lifetime WrestleMania pop.

Tragic Moment: None.

DUKE DROESE (BR)

WM Relevance: It speaks volumes that Droese never made 'Mania during his original 1994-96 run in the WWF.

Magic Moment: Droese shook his garbage can and waved to the fans during the gimmick battle royal at WM20.

Tragic Moment: "The Dumpster," who should've been accustomed to indignities, was eliminated by Doink in the same gimmick battle royal.

BUH BUH RAY DUDLEY (0-4)

WM Relevance: The man currently known as Bully Ray in TNA often claims The Dudley Boyz are the greatest team of all-time. Their lackluster WM win-loss record certainly doesn't reflect that.

Magic Moment: He and D-Von executed the 3D on both Edge and Christian during TLC2 at WM17.

Tragic Moment: The Dudleys were lost in the obscurity of a four-way tag team match (also involving Garrison Cade and Mark Jindrak, La Resistance, and World tag champs Rob Van Dam and Booker T) in their final 'Mania appearance, WM20.

D-VON DUDLEY (0-4)

WM Relevance: D-Von and Buh Buh Ray were short on glory but long on guts in their various three-way and four-way tag appearances at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: The Dudleys, along with The Hardy Boyz and the team of Edge and Christian, accomplished a remarkable feat by winning back-to-back *PWI* Match of the Year Awards for their efforts at WM16 and WM17.

Tragic Moment: Their unimpressive performance at WM20 might have indicated that their time in WWE was growing short.

JIM DUGGAN (2-1-1)

WM Relevance: "Hacksaw" was good for a hearty *Hoooo*, but that was about it. His role in the WWF was in setting up the stars who would steal the show at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: Duggan countered Bad News Brown's steel chair with a 2x4 at WM5. Both were disqualified.

Tragic Moment: Ted DiBiase used a simple fistdrop to pin Duggan in only 4:54 in an opening round bout of the WWF World title tournament at WM4.

RENE DUPREE (0-1)

WM Relevance: Dupree didn't have a significant 'Mania moment of any kind at WM20.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He and Robert Conway were stuck in a four-way tag team match—and hardly anyone noticed Dupree was there.

DYNAMITE KID (1-2)

WM Relevance: The British Bulldogs vs. The Dream Team was the best match of WM2 and the culmination of an eight-month title chase. It's their rich contribution to WrestleMania lore.

Magic Moment: Thank goodness Dynamite Kid had a hard head! Davey Boy Smith threw Greg Valentine into the ropes, where he butted heads with Dynamite, who was knocked to the arena floor. Smith covered Valentine for the pinfall and the WWF World tag team title.

Tragic Moment: A seriously injured back had Dynamite really ailing by WM3. Smith carried most of the load with Tito Santana in a losing effort against The Hart Foundation and Danny Davis.

EARTHQUAKE (4-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Sumo-turned-pro wrestler John Tenta absolutely dominated 'Mania, with lopsided singles wins over Hercules, Greg Valentine, and Adam Bomb, and a tag team victory with Typhoon over Money Inc. by countout.

Magic Moment: Earthquake destroyed Bomb in 32 seconds at WM10.

Tragic Moment: None.

Photo by Roy London

Typhoon & Earthquake double-team Irwin R. Schyster at WM8

EDGE (5-4)

WM Relevance: With nine appearances, he is among the most prolific WrestleMania performers in history … but he must do something about his current losing streak.

Magic Moment: Edge launching off a ladder and spearing Jeff Hardy off another ladder was the highlight of WM17—and it's the unforgettable image that made him a true superstar.

Tragic Moment: He was 5-0 as of WM22 and claimed he'd be the one to break The Undertaker's streak one day—until Jeff Hardy effectively eliminated him during WM23's Money in the Bank ladder match. He's lost at every 'Mania since.

JOSE ESTRADA JR. (BR)

WM Relevance: He was the only son of Jose Estrada Sr. to appear at WrestleMania.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He and partner Jesus Castillo were the two lesser-known members of Los Boricuas and two of the 28 schmoes eliminated in the 15-team tag team battle royal at WM14.

THE EXECUTIONER (0-1)

WM Relevance: The Executioner kicked off the greatest tradition in wrestling history, but we still think this opener would've been more entertaining if he had been replaced by, say, "Playboy" Buddy Rose.

Magic Moment: He was the first man introduced at the original WrestleMania.

Tragic Moment: Executioner submitted to Tito Santana's figure-four leglock in only 4:50.

FAAROOQ (1-2-BR)

WM Relevance: Faarooq (Ron Simmons) was more relevant to storylines as the leader of the Nation of Domination, but he provided more fun moments as Bradshaw's APA partner.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

On behalf of Linda Mac, take this, HHH!

Magic Moment: He teamed with Bradshaw and Tazz to shut up Right to Censor's Bull Buchanan, The Goodfather, and Val Venis at WM17

Tragic Moment: There was no way the NOD was going to beat the LOD in a Chicago Streetfight at WM13.

FINLAY (0-4)

WM Relevance: This Irish S.O.B. was already 46 years old by the time he made his 'Mania debut in the Money in the Bank ladder match at WM22.

Magic Moment: Finlay wasn't going to attempt any daredevil stunts during the Money in the Bank match at WM23, but he certainly used the ladder effectively as a weapon.

Tragic Moment: Lost to John Bradshaw Layfield in his specialty, a Belfast Brawl, at WM24.

RIC FLAIR (1-4)

WM Relevance: His retirement match against Shawn Michaels provided an indelible memory, but his 'Mania legacy is only ordinary. Starrcade was his real showcase.

Magic Moment: Flair was given the most dramatic sendoff in wrestling history at WM24, where his loss to Michaels ended his WWE career.

Tragic Moment: The "Nature Boy" tried to smooch Elizabeth at WM8, only for Liz to slap him and Randy Savage beat him to a bloody pulp.

MICK FOLEY (2-3-1)

WM Relevance: He experienced the full gamut of WrestleMania as Mankind, Cactus Jack, and Mick Foley, and fulfilled every role from headliner to special referee.

Magic Moment: Foley got the chance to headline 'Mania at WM16, representing Linda McMahon in a four-way match also involving The Rock, The Big Show, and WWF World champ Triple-H.

Tragic Moment: He went down in flames at WM22—literally. Edge speared him through a flaming table and won their hardcore match.

ALICIA FOX (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: It's tough to shine in 10-person tag matches and 25-person Diva battle royals.

Magic Moment: Alicia got her hand raised alongside Michelle McCool, Layla, Maryse, and Vickie Guerrero over the team of Mickie James, Kelly Kelly, Gail Kim, Beth Phoenix, and Eve Torres in a 10-woman tag match at WM26.

Tragic Moment: She was on the receiving end of Phoenix' stunning Glam Slam during that bout.

Photo by Brent Cook

Dory "Hoss" Funk locks up Tito Santanta

MR. FUJI (0-1)

WM Relevance: His primary influence on 'Mania was as a manager, and his prized protégé, Yokozuna, was a centerpiece of WM9 and WM10.

Magic Moment: Fuji threw salt in Bret Hart's eyes, enabling Yokozuna to score the pinfall and capture the WWF World title at WM9.

Tragic Moment: The salt backfired at WM5 when—during his only in-ring appearance at 'Mania—he accidentally tossed it into The Warlord's face, making Fuji easy pickings for WWF World tag champs Demolition.

FUNAKI (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Funaki was involved in only two 'Manias during his 12-year stay in WWE, but he provided some funny moments and the fans ultimately demonstrated their respect for him.

Magic Moment: Received a huge reaction from the Madison Square Garden crowd during a 10-man cruiserweight title gauntlet match at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Bradshaw's diving shoulderblock and Rodney's pinfall cost him the WWF Hardcore title during a battle royal at WM16.

DORY FUNK JR. (1-0)

WM Relevance: Funk was 45 years old at WM2 and was among a series of former NWA World champions from the 1970s to enjoy the WWF spotlight in the twilight of their careers.

Magic Moment: Hoss acted as the ring general while teaming with brother Terry in a win over Tito Santana and Junkyard Dog at WM2.

Tragic Moment: Ring announcer Lee Marshall introduced him as "*Hoss* Funk," which was the WWF's continuing effort to pigeon-hole him as a rough cowpoke rather than a polished former NWA World champion.

TERRY FUNK (2-0)

WM Relevance: His impact was that of a tag team wrestler, joining forces with brother Dory at WM2 and Mick Foley at WM14.

Magic Moment: It was good that "Chainsaw Charlie" knew how to drive a forklift. He lifted a battered Billy Gunn and Road Dogg and dropped them in a waiting dumpster to win the match with partner Cactus Jack.

Tragic Moment: The New Age Outlaws power-bombed Charlie into the dumpster during the same brawl.

DOUG FURNAS (0-1)

WM Relevance: His powerlifting background and physique gave him the look that Vince McMahon wanted, but he and Lafon were unable to recreate the success they had enjoyed in All-Japan and ECW.

Magic Moment: He and Phil Lafon appeared in the opener of WM13 in a four-way match also involving The Godwinns, The New Blackjacks, and eventual winners The Headbangers.

Tragic Moment: Furnas was counted out of the ring, causing his team to be eliminated from that bout.

RON GARVIN (0-1)

WM Relevance: The rugged veteran often lost to less-talented opponents during his WWF stint, leading many to believe that his only purpose was to make the NWA look inferior. That was certainly in evidence at WM5.

Magic Moment: Snared Dino Bravo in a sleeperhold, and it seemed that a WrestleMania victory was within his grasp.

Tragic Moment: Bravo pinned the former NWA World champion after a rudimentary sideslam.

PETE GAS (BR)

WM Relevance: His only relevance was to prove that Shane McMahon had childhood friends after all.

Magic Moment: Pete sprayed Headbanger Thrasher with a fire extinguisher to score a three-count and hold the WWF hardcore title briefly during a battle royal at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Tazz snatched up Pete with a T-bone suplex to score the pinfall at 10:40.

JACKIE GAYDA (0-1)

WM Relevance: Torrie Wilson and Sable stripping Miss Jackie of her lingerie makes us assume that she will be remembered for her sex appeal.

Magic Moment: Jackie teamed with Stacy Keibler to represent the Raw brand against Smackdown's Torrie Wilson and Sable in a *Playboy* Evening Gown Match at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Torrie rolled up Jackie for the pinfall. How humbling.

JOY GIOVANNI (BR)

WM Relevance: She is perhaps the most forgettable WrestleMania personality ever.

Magic Moment: One could say it was as if Giovanni never left. But it would be more accurate to say that no one noticed she was missing for the past six years.

Tragic Moment: Giovanni was the second Diva eliminated from the Divas battle royal at WM25.

ROBERT GIBSON (BR)

WM Relevance: The Rock 'n' Roll Express was yet another example of an NWA team going to the WWF and getting buried, especially at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He watched Rick Morton going over the top rope for the elimination and must have thought, *So much for me being the weak link.*

Tragic Moment: He had to follow Morton the showers.

THE GOBBLEDYGOOKER (BR)

WM Relevance: The craziest idea that WWE ever hatched made a surprise appearance at the WM17 gimmick battle royal.

Magic Moment: Gobbledygooker proved that even the truly awful—floppy feet and all—can become endearing over time.

Tragic Moment: Typhoon dumped the Gooker over the top rope within seconds, making GG the second man eliminated in the battle royal.

THE GODFATHER (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: No one paid to watch The Godfather wrestle. They wanted to see his 'ho train and the ensuing spectacle.

Magic Moment: The Godfather got the hot tag from D-Lo Brown and a great response against Big Bossman and Bull Buchanan at WM16.

Tragic Moment: He tagged D-Lo back into the match. Bossman and Buchanan took care of him in rapid fashion.

HENRY GODWINN (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: He satisfied the obligatory hillbilly quota.

Magic Moment: Henry dominated Skip and Zip with power moves during the Godwinns' WWF World tag team title defense against The Bodydonnas at WM12.

Tragic Moment: Mosh scored the winning pinfall over Godwinn in a match at WM13 that also involved The Blackjacks and Doug Furnas and Phil Lafon.

PHINEAS GODWINN (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: Although Phineas would later be known as Midian, his three 'Mania appearances were as Henry Godwinn's cousin and tag partner.

Magic Moment: Godwinn was readying Skip for the Slop Drop when Sunny jumped on the ring apron and flashed her derriere toward him.

Tragic Moment: Skip rolled up a Phineas to score the pinfall and capture the WWF World tag team title for The Bodydonnas.

BILL GOLDBERG (0-1)

WM Relevance: He never caught on in WWE as he did in WCW, and, to make matters worse, he had already declined to renew his contract with WWE headed into WM20.

Magic Moment: Goldberg speared Brock Lesnar and dropped him with the jackhammer to score the pinfall.

Tragic Moment: Special referee Steve Austin gave stunners to Lesnar and Goldberg after the match. Never trust a rattlesnake—not even one camouflaged as a zebra.

GOLDUST (0-4-NC)

WM Relevance: Goldust is the ultimate merger of sports and showmanship, so he's really the personification of WrestleMania. It would've helped if he had won a match, though.

Magic Moment: How could Roddy Piper stripping him down to his frilly women's lingerie at WM 12 be considered a magic moment for Goldust? Because he's an exhibitionist.

Tragic Moment: Goldust served as a mere lumberjack in the dark match pitting WWE tag champs The Colons vs. World tag champs The Miz and John Morrison at WM25.

Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

Goldust felt pretty good about himself against Piper at this point

GIANT GONZALES (0-1)

WM Relevance: The Undertaker's streak has become part of WrestleMania lore. But 'Taker did not score a clean pin over Gonzales.

Magic Moment: Gonzales thought he might have a fighting chance against The Undertaker at WM9 when manager Harvey Wippleman broke out the chloroform and they smothered the "Dead Man" to the point of unconsciousness.

Tragic Moment: An unusually alert referee witnessed the infraction and disqualified Gonzales.

THE GOON (BR)

WM Relevance: "Wild" Bill Irwin was saddled with the ridiculous Goon gimmick in the WWF, as demonstrated by the WM17 battle royal.

Magic Moment: He lunged for Nikolai Volkoff and took a pretty good bump over the top rope.

Tragic Moment: Brother Love nearly got the best of The Goon during an exchange in the corner. How sad.

CHAVO GUERRERO JR. (1-1-BR)

WM Relevance: He has been the reliable undercard performer who gives 100 percent effort whether his hand is raised in victory or not.

Magic Moment: Guerrero pinned Rey Mysterio Jr. to retain his cruiser championship in a 10-man gauntlet match at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Kane chokeslammed Guerrero to take his ECW title in nine seconds at WM24.

EDDIE GUERRERO (2-2)

WM Relevance: Guerrero's victory over Kurt Angle at WM20 was considered a peak moment for WWE at the time.

Magic Moment: The WWE champion squirmed out of his untied boot to escape Angle's anklelock and pin him with a quick roll-up.

Tragic Moment: Mysterio's defeat of Guerrero at WM21 led to Eddie's heel turn three weeks later.

VICKIE GUERRERO (1-0)

WM Relevance: Vickie was one of the strongest heels to participate in WM26.

Magic Moment: She came off the top rope with a shaky Cougar Splash—her version of the frog splash—to pin Kelly Kelly in a 10-woman tag team match.

Tragic Moment: Vickie accidentally lifted Kelly's shoulder during the count before repositioning her in a pinning position.

Photo by Roy London

An Eddie Guerrero shoulderblock sends Kurt Angle reeling

BART GUNN (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: He ensured that Vince McMahon would never approve a shoot for WrestleMania ever again.

Magic Moment: "Bodacious" Bart Gunn and "Bombastic" Bob Holly managed to hang in the WM14 battle royal until The Legion of Doom eliminated them.

Tragic Moment: Butterbean flattened him in 32 seconds at WM15.

BILLY GUNN (1-3)

WM Relevance: He tried it with Bart Gunn and again with Road Dogg, but it wasn't until he brought his friend Chuck to the dance that he had success at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He and Chuck Palumbo retained the WWE tag title against Al Snow and Maven, The APA, The Dudley Boyz, and The Hardy Boyz at WM18.

Tragic Moment: Chainsaw Charlie hoisted Gunn and Road Dogg on a forklift and dropped them in a dumpster, leading to Charlie and Cactus Jack claiming the WWF tag title at WM14.

CHARLIE HAAS (1-1)

WM Relevance: Haas' low profile at 'Mania indicates that tag team wrestling has played a relatively small role at the event overall.

Magic Moment: He and Shelton Benjamin retained the WWE tag title by defeating Los Guerreros and Chris Benoit and Rhyno at WM19.

Tragic Moment: The World's Greatest Tag Team seemed to be mere bystanders in their match also involving The APA, The Basham Brothers, and WWE tag champs Scotty 2 Hotty and Rikishi at WM20.

THE HAITI KID (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Haiti Kid helped rally fans to Mr. T's side and got them to hate Piper even more just in time for WM2.

Magic Moment: He joined Little Beaver in performing a rowboat-like maneuver on Lord Littlebrook at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Haiti Kid decided to keep the haircut that Roddy Piper and Bob Orton Jr. gave him just prior to WM2.

HAKU (1-3-BR)

WM Relevance: His credibility rubbed off on his opponents, especially when they scored victories over him at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: Haku and Tama dropped manager Bobby Heenan onto Koko B. Ware to score the pinfall and the win over Ware and The British Bulldogs at WM4.

Tragic Moment: An angry Haku tried to superkick his partner, Andre the Giant, after they lost the WWF tag title to Demolition at WM7, but the big man sent him running for cover.

JILLIAN HALL (BR)

WM Relevance: Only one brief battle royal appearance during her five years in WWE? No wonder she was released last year.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Gail Kim eliminated her in the WM25 Diva battle royal.

JEFF HARDY (0-5)

WM Relevance: He joins top stars such as The Big Show and Shawn Michaels as having one of the worst win-loss records in 'Mania history.

Magic Moment: At WM17, the "Charismatic Enigma" leaped from the top of a 16-foot ladder and delivered a Swanton Bomb onto Buh Buh Ray Dudley, crashing through a table to the concrete floor.

Tragic Moment: Hardy performed a similar move against Edge during the Money in the Bank ladder match at WM23, eliminating both men.

Owen Hart traps brother Bret in a Sharpshooter

MATT HARDY (2-6)

WM Relevance: Matt kept matches on course while Jeff made the highlight reel.

Magic Moment: Hardy was gaining momentum as a singles star when he retained the cruiserweight title against Rey Mysterio Jr. at WM19.

Tragic Moment: Matt and Jeff really didn't want to face each other in an Extreme Rules match at WM 25. The fans didn't want it either.

BRET HART (8-5-BR)

WM Relevance: Hart's singles matches were dramatic epics.

Magic Moment: Bret rebounded from a clean loss to brother Owen in the opener to defeat Yokozuna for the WWF title in the main event of WM10.

Tragic Moment: "The Hitman" thought he had survived his grueling 60-minute Ironman match against Shawn Michaels at WM12, only to have WWF Interim President Gorilla Monsoon order sudden-death overtime, which cost Hart the World belt.

OWEN HART (5-1-1)

WM Relevance: His greatest impact was as a tag team specialist, winning WWF World tag team title matches with Davey Boy Smith and Jeff Jarrett.

Magic Moment: Owen pinned brother Bret cleanly with a victory roll at WM10.

Tragic Moment: His pinfall loss to European champion Triple-H at WM14 indicated that his career was going nowhere after his brother Bret's departure from the WWF.

HAWK (2-0-BR)

WM Relevance: The Road Warriors made out well at WrestleMania, with two tag team wins and a tag team battle royal victory.

Magic Moment: Poor Crush. Hawk gave him an icy hosing with a fire extinguisher, came off the top rope to nail him with a Doomsday Device, and then joined Ahmed Johnson to catch him with running 2x4 shot. The LOD was at their best in this six-man Chicago Streetfight against the Nation of Domination.

Tragic Moment: None.

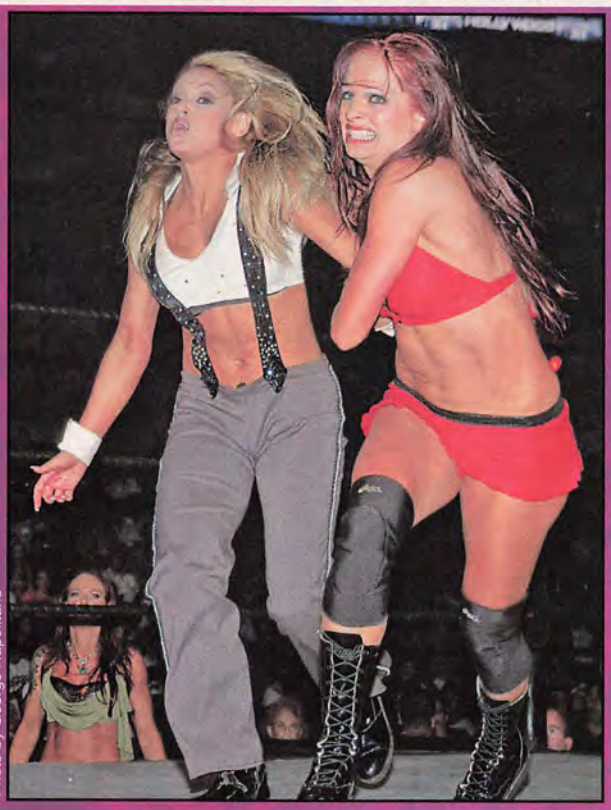


Photo by George Napolitano

The momentum is briefly Christy Hemme's against Trish Stratus

MICHAEL HAYES (BR)

WM Relevance: None. If only Hayes could have taken center stage at 'Mania with Terry Gordy and Buddy Roberts in his prime.

Magic Moment: The former Freebird got to strut to the ring one more time in the WM17 gimmick battle royal.

Tragic Moment: One Man Gang unceremoniously tossed Hayes over the top rope in the battle royal.

BILLY JACK HAYNES (0-0-1)

WM Relevance: Billy Jack didn't meet expectations at 'Mania ... or the WWF ... or wrestling in general.

Magic Moment: Haynes snared Hercules in an escape-proof full-nelson at WM3.

Tragic Moment: He didn't realize he was supposed to apply the hold *inside* the ring. The match was declared a double-countout.

BOBBY HEENAN (1-1)

WM Relevance: He was the evil influence over Andre the Giant that led to Andre vs. Hulk Hogan at WM3.

Magic Moment: Heenan led The Islanders to victory by scoring the winning pinfall over Koko B. Ware, sending Ware and The British Bulldogs to defeat at WM4.

Tragic Moment: Even Heenan was embarrassed to lose a match to someone named The Red Rooster in only 32 seconds at WM5.

GREGORY HELMS (1-1)

WM Relevance: Helms earned his one win and one loss at WM18.

Magic Moment: The Hurricane, who wasn't even booked for WM18, evoked the 24/7 rule and pinned Spike Dudley for the Hardcore title.

Tragic Moment: Spike's girlfriend, Molly Holly, pinned The Hurricane for the same belt moments later.

CHRISTY HEMME (0-1)

WM Relevance: It was widely believed that Gail Kim, Jacquelyn, or Jazz was more deserving of a title shot at Trish Stratus at WM21.

Magic Moment: She performed a split on the top rope before taking the Women's champion over with a sunset flip and near-fall.

Tragic Moment: Stratus humiliated her at the start of the match, lying on the mat and ordering Hemme to pin her.

CURT HENNIG (1-3)

WM Relevance: WrestleMania was not the best stage for Hennig, who tended to excel at SummerSlam and house shows.

Magic Moment: Lex Luger mistakenly laid his hands on special referee Hennig during his match against WWF champ Yokozuna at WM10, and "Mr. Perfect" immediately disqualified him.

Tragic Moment: Luger pinned Hennig at WM9 when Hennig's feet were clearly on the ropes. Please see previous paragraph.

MARK HENRY (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Only three 'Mania appearances during a 14-year stint? Not good!

Magic Moment: Appearing at his first WrestleMania was a dream come true for Henry, who entered the WM14 tag team battle royal with D-Lo Brown as his partner. They were eliminated when Brown was thrown over the top rope.

Tragic Moment: The Undertaker closed the casket lid on Henry at WM22.

HERCULES (1-4-1)

WM Relevance: He suffered key losses to Rick Steamboat, The Ultimate Warrior, and Earthquake at 'Mania, making them seem like dragon-slayers.

Magic Moment: Hercules defeated King Haku in 6:37 in the opener of WM5.

Tragic Moment: After going to a double-countout with Billy Jack Haynes at WM3, Hercules wrapped a chain around his fist and pounded Haynes' face until it was a bloody mess.

HILLBILLY JIM (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: He was a crowd-pleaser at both 'Manias, even if they were 17 years apart.

Magic Moment: Hillbilly Jim showed great compassion after King Kong Bundy gave Little Beaver a flying elbowsmash at WM3. Jim left the ring with all four midgets who participated in that match.

Tragic Moment: The Iron Sheik dumped Jim over the top rope to win the WM17 gimmick battle royal.

THE HONKY TONK MAN (1-2)

WM Relevance: He was a solid mid-card player the crowd loved to hate. All eyes were on Honky Tonk Man when he was in the ring.

Magic Moment: Honky pulled a major upset over Jake Roberts at WM3, foreshadowing his historic Intercontinental victory three months later. Even Roberts' cornerman, Alice Cooper, was shocked.

Tragic Moment: He and Greg Valentine lost to The Hart Foundation at WM5.

HULK HOGAN (8-3-1)

WM Relevance: Hogan was legdropping Randy Savage in Trump Plaza while The Undertaker was still driving Teddy Long's car.

Magic Moment: Hogan's WM3 bodyslam Andre the Giant before 93,173 fans at the Pontiac Silverdome may symbolize WrestleMania forever.

Tragic Moment: Losing a test of strength to Vince McMahon at WM19 was almost as embarrassing as taking a legdrop through a table a few minutes later.

BOB HOLLY (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Holly made good with a victory over 12 other men at WM16.

Magic Moment: He smashed a glass jar over the head of Tazz, who had his Tazz-mission locked on hardcore champ Crash Holly. He pinned Crash for the title at 14:59.

Tragic Moment: None.

CRASH HOLLY (BR)

WM Relevance: It's hard to believe Crash appeared at 'Mania only once, but it occurred at the height of 24/7 fever.

Magic Moment: He smacked a cookie sheet over Tazz' head to regain the Hardcore title at 14:18 of a 15-minute battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Tazz snared Crash in the Tazz-mission, only to have Hardcore Holly smash a glass jar over his head and pin Crash himself.

MOLLY HOLLY (0-1)

WM Relevance: The fact that her match against Victoria at WM20 was hair vs. hair indicated that women's wrestling had become a mane attraction at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: Molly executed a sunset flip off the top rope into a power bomb to score a near-fall over Women's champion Victoria (Tara).

Tragic Moment: Victoria shaving Molly bald as the result of their pre-match stipulation was humiliating for her.

SAM HOUSTON (BR)

WM Relevance: He was the brother of Jake Roberts and Rockin' Robin, both of whom made greater impacts on WrestleMania.

Magic Moment: He got to watch Gladys Knight sing "America The Beautiful" to kick off WM4.

Tragic Moment: He did a little two-step jig before being thrown out of the ring by ex-referee Danny Davis during that event's battle royal.

THE IRON SHEIK (3-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Although The Iron Sheik was a former WWF World heavyweight champion, his primary impact on 'Mania was as a tag team specialist with Nikolai Volkoff.

Magic Moment: It was the perfect evening for The Iron Sheik. At WM17, he received a great crowd reaction, outfought Sgt. Slaughter, and managed to win the gimmick battle royal—and didn't have to share the spotlight with Volkoff!

Tragic Moment: An interfering Jim Duggan smacked Iron Sheik with his trusty 2x4 at WM3. The bright side was that gave the Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff the DQ victory over The Killer Bees.

IVORY (0-1)

WM Relevance: It's too bad that her WWF Women's title defense against Chyna at WM17 was her only contribution to WrestleMania. *PWI* ranked that as the 10th best match of ... out of 11. And the gimmick battle royal shouldn't even count.

Magic Moment: Ivory had the privilege of entering the ring at 'Mania as the Women's champion.

Tragic Moment: Chyna dominated Ivory to win her first Women's title at 2:40.

Hogan slamming Andre in an iconic 'Mania image

MICKIE JAMES (1-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Her only standout match took place at WM22, but most wrestlers don't even make it that far in a lifetime.

Magic Moment: James upset Trish Stratus for the Women's title at WM22.

Tragic Moment: She and Michelle McCool eliminated each other simultaneously during the 25-Diva battle royal at WM25.

MARTY JANNETTY (1-2)

WM Relevance: Given The Rockers' losing record at 'Mania, no wonder they never held the tag team title.

Magic Moment: Jannetty delivered a missile dropkick to Haku's face, carrying The Rockers to a big win over Haku and The Barbarian at WM7.

Tragic Moment: Mr. Fuji threw salt in Jannetty's eyes, causing him to be counted out and giving The Orient Express a victory over The Rockers at WM6.

JEFF JARRETT (1-1)

WM Relevance: Jarrett appeared at 'Mania only twice, once as his "Double-J" character and again in his "Slapnuts" persona.

Magic Moment: Jarrett and Owen Hart retained the WWF tag title against D-Lo Brown and Test at WM15.

Tragic Moment: He needed interference from The Roadie to save his Intercontinental belt against Razor Ramon at WM11.

JAZZ (1-1)

WM Relevance: She honed her street-savvy monster image in a Philadelphia bingo hall and unleashed it on the sport's greatest stage.

Magic Moment: Jazz wrenched Trish Stratus' leg this way and that—and eventually pinned Lita to successfully defend her WWF Women's title at WM18.

Tragic Moment: That match had to follow The Rock vs. Hulk Hogan. Yikes!

CHRIS JERICHO (4-6)

WM Relevance: Jericho is one of only two men (the other being Edge) to go from the opening match (WM17) to the final match (WM18) within the span of a year.

Magic Moment: He entered the ring at WM18 as the first man to ever hold the WWF and WCW World titles simultaneously—although he would lose both belts to Triple-H.

Tragic Moment: Jericho realized he had great affection for Trish Stratus, who turned on him at WM20, enabling Christian to score a cheap victory.

MARK JINDRAK (0-1)

WM Relevance: ECW gave birth to the three-way and four-way craze that still heavily influenced WWE even in 2004. Jindrak was essential to the body count.

Magic Moment: He and Garrison Cade briefly gained the upper hand in a double-team effort against Booker T during a four-way match at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Jindrak and Cade lost and no one cared.

AHMED JOHNSON (1-1)

WM Relevance: This is the case of another wrestler who enjoyed a hot run, but whose longevity survived the span of only two WrestleManias.

Magic Moment: He and Road Warrior Hawk hit Crush with a running 2x4 shot, enabling Animal to score the pinfall in a Chicago Streetfight at WM13.

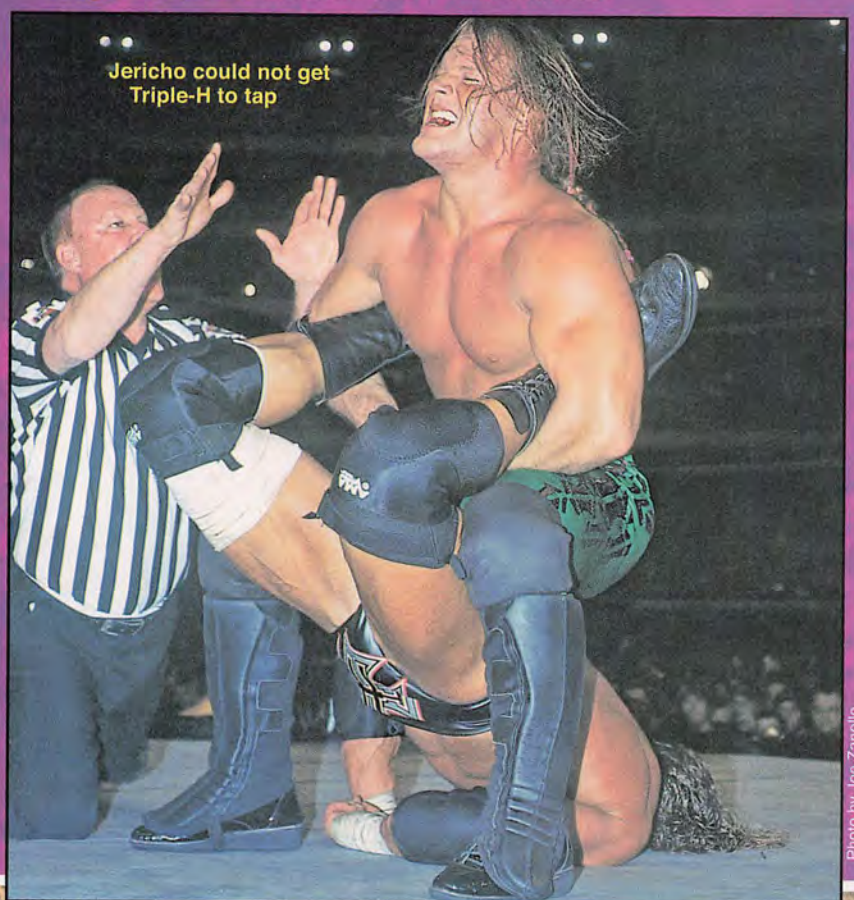
Tragic Moment: Johnson chose the wrong side when he, Jake Roberts, and Yokozuna lost to Owen Hart, Davey Boy Smith, and Big Van Vader at WM12.

S.D. JONES (0-1)

WM Relevance: Jones is one of the few true preliminary wrestlers to compete at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He rushed the 420-pound King Kong Bundy like a house of fire at the opening bell during their match at WM1.

Tragic Moment: Bundy stopped him cold and pinned him in only nine seconds.



Jericho could not get Triple-H to tap

Photo by Joe Zanolle

JUNKYARD DOG (1-2-BR)

WM Relevance: He was among the early fan favorites of the Rock 'n' Wrestling era, considered equal in popularity to Andre the Giant, Jimmy Snuka, and Sgt. Slaughter.

Magic Moment: Greg Valentine left and took a countout loss rather than lose the Intercontinental title to Junkyard Dog at WM1.

Tragic Moment: JYD's one-dimensional style was a blatant liability by WM3, where Harley Race easily outwrestled him for the victory.

SID JUSTICE (0-2)

WM Relevance: Sid lost two main-event caliber matches at 'Mania in controversial fashion.

Magic Moment: At WM8, Justice became one of the few wrestlers to kick out after absorbing Hulk Hogan's legdrop.

Tragic Moment: Bret Hart's interference caused "Psycho Sid" to lose the WWF World title to The Undertaker at WM13.

LELANI KAI (0-2)

WM Relevance: Vince McMahon must have thought she was a star-maker, considering her primary task was to make Wendi Richter and Alundra Blayze look good.

Magic Moment: The WWF Women's champion sauntered into the ring with her manager, Fabulous Moolah, with every confidence she would beat Richter, the former champ, at WM1. She was wrong.

Tragic Moment: Kai lost to Women's champ Blayze at WM10.

KAMALA (BR)

WM Relevance: Interestingly, the "Ugandan Headhunter," who had classic feuds with Hulk Hogan and The Undertaker, didn't make it to 'Mania in his prime.

Magic Moment: He sent Doink the Clown and One Man Gang hurtling over the top rope in succession in the WM17 gimmick battle royal.

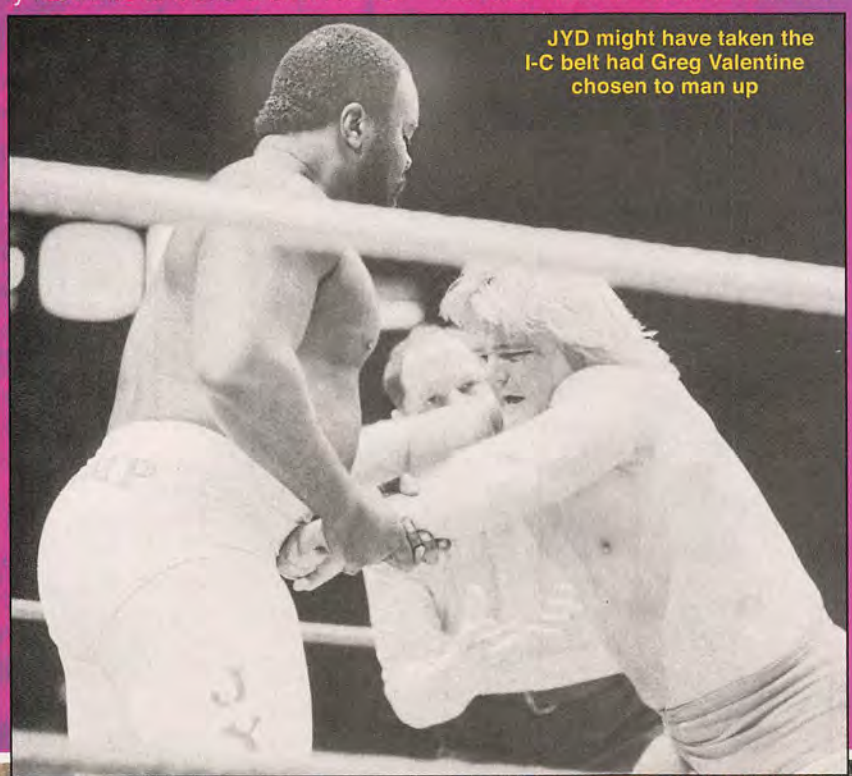
Tragic Moment: Sgt. Slaughter took advantage of the distraction and pushed Kamala over the top rope.

KANE (5-7)

WM Relevance: Kane has enjoyed several triumphs and lost a few more matches at 'Mania, but the key number to remember is 12—the impressive number of times he has performed at WWE's premier event.

Magic Moment: The "Big Red Monster" was at his dominant best at WM24, where he choke-slammed Chavo Guerrero Jr. and took the ECW title in nine seconds.

Tragic Moment: Kane had choke-slammed Triple-H and was about to go for the cover when Chyna—the object of Kane's affection—begged to use a steel chair on HHH. Kane consented, and Chyna smacked *him* with the chair instead. To make matters worse, Kane is disqualified.



JYD might have taken the I-C belt had Greg Valentine chosen to man up

MARIA KANELLIS (0-2)

WM Relevance: Considering she was eliminated so early in the WM24 Diva battle royal, Maria's only real contribution to 'Mania occurred at WM24.

Magic Moment: Maria rode Melina with a hoot-inspiring bronco buster when Maria and Ashley Massaro faced Melina and Beth Phoenix in a lumberjill match.

Tragic Moment: She gave Snoop Dogg a passionate kiss after her team's losing effort—and every dude at the Citrus Bowl wished they were Snoop.

THE KAT (0-1)

WM Relevance: There was always an air of unpredictability when The Kat was on camera, considering she had flashed her breasts at the camera at Armageddon '99.

Magic Moment: The legendary Mae Young escorted The Kat to the ring at WM16.

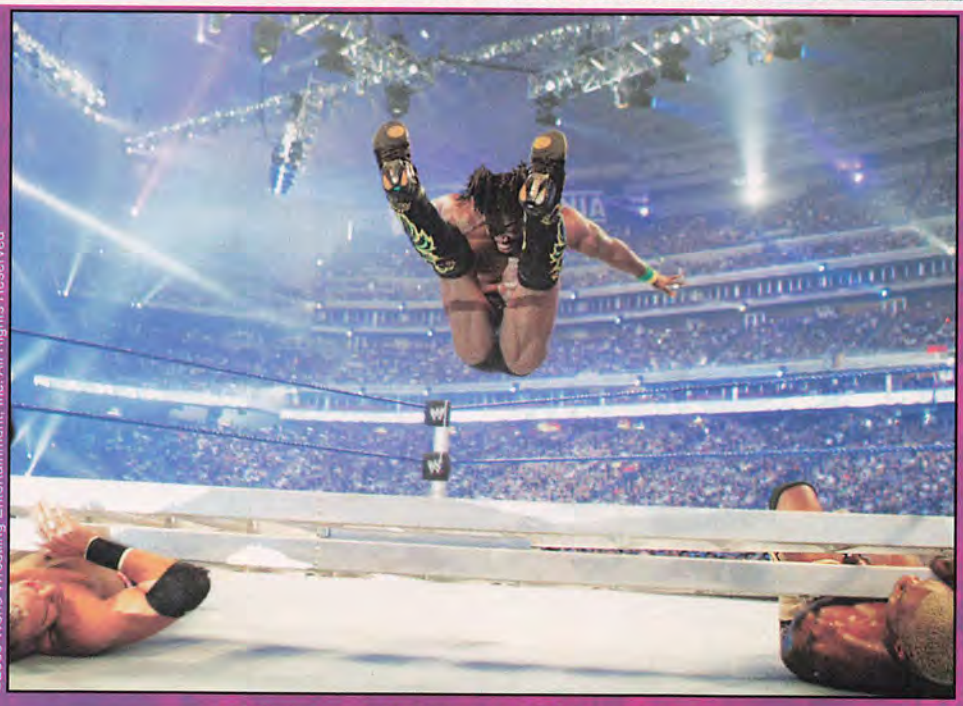
Tragic Moment: She was too interested in special referee Val Venis, which caused her to lose to the non-athletic Terri Runnels in less than three minutes.

STACY KEIBLER (0-1)

WM Relevance: Stacy had the best legs in WrestleMania history!

Magic Moment: She and Jackie Gayda made a sensational entrance at WM20.

Tragic Moment: Stacy was visibly upset when Jackie was pinned in this one. It would be hard to tolerate Torrie Wilson and Sable's incessant bragging.



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Kofi demonstrates his new ladder match technique

KELLY KELLY (0-2)

WM Relevance: Eye-candy, eye-candy.

Magic Moment: She flashed a beautiful smile and gave the crowd a nice wave on the ring to the 25-Diva battle royal at WM26.

Tragic Moment: Michelle McCool flattened Kelly with a Faith Breaker, setting her up for further humiliation, Vickie Guerrero's Cougar Splash off the top rope, at WM25.

KEN KENNEDY (1-1)

WM Relevance: He realized his poor standing in WWE when he went from winning the Money in the Bank at WM23 to failing to win the MITB at WM24—and received no title shot in between.

Magic Moment: Mr. Kennedy outmaneuvered CM Punk to grab the MITB briefcase at WM23.

Tragic Moment: At WM24, Kennedy was readying John Morrison for a superplex off a ladder when Shelton Benjamin brought both of them down with a power bomb.

THE GREAT KHALI (1-0)

WM Relevance: He may be granted induction into the Giant Gonzales wing of the WWE Hall of Fame.

Magic Moment: Khali used a ring-shattering tree slam to plant Kane for the pinfall at 4:32 at WM23.

Tragic Moment: Kane paid homage to the 20th anniversary of WM3 by bodyslamming Khali, just as Hulk Hogan had done to Andre the Giant.

BILLY KIDMAN (BR)

WM Relevance: He seemed as much at ease at Madison Square Garden as he did at a flea market.

Magic Moment: Kidman executed a superb shooting star press outside the ring and onto Jamie Noble and Nunzio during the cruiserweight open at WM20.

Tragic Moment: He was horrified to see Brock Lesnar steal his move and use it against WWE champ Kurt Angle at WM19. He was glad Brock botched it, though.

GAIL KIM (0-2)

WM Relevance: Maybe she'll make a bigger impact at WrestleMania, even if it's on Daniel Bryan's arm this year.

Magic Moment: Hitting the entrance ramp to strains of Kid Rock for the WM25 Diva battle royal had to be thrilling, especially for someone performing at her first 'Mania.

Tragic Moment: Gail, Mickie James, Kelly Kelly, Beth Phoenix, and Eve Torres came up short against Michelle McCool, Layla, Maryse, Alicia Fox, and Vickie Guerrero at WM26.

KIM CHEE (BR)

WM Relevance: Every time Kim Chee appears, WWE agent Steve Lombardi is nowhere to be found.

Magic Moment: He made a rare appearance as an in-ring competitor at the WM17 gimmick battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Kamala didn't even bother to watch his back.

KOFI KINGSTON (0-2)

WM Relevance: Money in the Bank can be a great opportunity, but it can also be used to bury mid-card talent. Watch out, Kofi.

Magic Moment: Kingston debuted a new technique in the Money in the Bank match at WM25, often laying the ladder across his opponents' bodies and then delivering a legdrop onto the ladder. *Ouch!*

Tragic Moment: He was heartbroken when Jack Swagger—a man he had beaten in the past—outfoxed everyone to grab the MITB briefcase at WM26.

CPL. KIRSCHNER (1-0)

WM Relevance: Maybe Cpl. Kirschner would have caught on if he had a higher rank. *Captain* Kirschner perhaps?

Magic Moment: He cracked Freddie Blassie's cane over Nikolai Volkoff's head to steal a victory at WM2.

Tragic Moment: The "We Want Slaughter" chants were deafening.

KOJI KITAO (1-0)

WM Relevance: Kitao and Genichiro Tenyru are the most successful tag team in 'Mania history to remain relatively unknown to American fans today.

Magic Moment: The former sumo shocked the L.A. crowd by taking Ax and Smash off their feet with shoulderblocks and chops at WM7.

Tragic Moment: Where were the Kitao action figures?

BRIAN KNOBS (1-1)

WM Relevance: Aside from Sgt. Slaughter and Gen. Adnan, Knobs might have been the most hated man in the Los Angeles Sports Arena.

Magic Moment: Knobs pinned Jim Neidhart at WM7 to win the WWF tag title for The Nasty Boys and end The Hart Foundation forever.

Tragic Moment: Manager Jimmy Hart lying on the arena floor and kicking like a baby while celebrating their victory.

PHIL LAFON (0-1)

WM Relevance: The skilled—yet silent—Lafon wasn't a good fit for the WWF or 'Mania during the Attitude Era.

Magic Moment: Lafon's precision suplexes were impressive during the elimination match involving Lafon and Doug Furnas, The Blackjacks, and The Headbangers at WM.

Tragic Moment: He couldn't aid his partner in time to prevent from being counted out.

BOBBY LASHLEY (1-1)

WM Relevance: Being involved in a huge angle with Donald Trump that results in Vince McMahon losing his hair ensures his place in WrestleMania lore.

Magic Moment: ECW champion Lashley beat Intercontinental champ Umaga, ensuring that Trump could shave Vince McMahon's coif at WM23.

Tragic Moment: He failed to stand out in his initial 'Mania outing, the Money in the Bank match at WM22.

JOHN BRADSHAW LAYFIELD (1-2-BR)

WM Relevance: He was comic-relief filler as a member of the APA, but his transformation into JBL made him into a WrestleMania headliner.

Magic Moment: JBL maneuvered Chris Benoit on his back while still trapped in the Crippler Crossface, held the ropes for leverage, and pinned him for the U.S. title at WM22.

Tragic Moment: Layfield's historic 280-day WWE title reign ended at WM21, courtesy of young upstart John Cena.

LAYLA (1-BR)

WM Relevance: Only a showdown with conniving ally Michelle McCool could make her a player at 'Mania ... maybe.

Magic Moment: She joined Michelle McCool, Maryse, Alicia Fox, and Vickie Guerrero in defeating Mickie James, Kelly Kelly, Gail Kim, Beth Phoenix, and Eve Torres at WM26.

Tragic Moment: Layla was seemingly lost in the cast of thousands involved in the WM25 Diva battle royal.

BROCK LESNAR (1-1)

WM Relevance: Fans will remember that he abandoned the sport, not that he almost broke his neck for them.

Magic Moment: Lesnar botched a shooting star press, but he recovered enough to defeat Kurt Angle for the WWE title at WM19.

Tragic Moment: Special referee Steve Austin stunned him following his loss to Bill Goldberg at WM20.

LITA (0-1)

WM Relevance: Lita was still recovering from a neck injury when she made her only in-ring contribution to 'Mania: challenging Women's champ Jazz in a three-way also involving Trish Stratus.

Magic Moment: Lita barely escaped a Stratusfaction attempt by throwing Trish out of the ring at WM18.

Tragic Moment: Jazz hooked Lita with a fisherman's suplex to score the pinfall.

Photo by Joe Zanolle

Brock Lesnar and Kurt Angle fall into each other's arms after their epic encounter

LITTLE BEAVER (1-0)

WM Relevance: He proved that 85-pound midgets and 446-pound behemoths don't belong in the same ring.

Magic Moment: Beaver bravely confronted King Kong Bundy during a mixed tag bout at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Bundy delivered a flying elbowsmash onto Beaver, resulting in a back injury that ended his career.

LORD LITTLEBROOK (0-1)

WM Relevance: He's a reminder that Hornswoggle could use an arch-villain his own size.

Magic Moment: Despite being one of Little Beaver's chief rivals, he showed solidarity with the ex-NWA midget champ after King Kong Bundy's inexcusable attack on him at WM3.

Tragic Moment: He watched in horror as Bundy's flying elbowsmash came crashing down on Beaver.

LITTLE TOKYO (0-1)

WM Relevance: He was never seen in a WWF ring again—not even as a mini-Doink.

Magic Moment: Tokyo and Lord Littlebrook abandoned King Kong Bundy after he elbowsmashed their pint-sized rival, Little Beaver.

Tragic Moment: He had witnessed the most heinous act in midget wrestling history.

LEX LUGER (2-1)

WM Relevance: Vince McMahon thought he could be a 'Mania headliner. No one else did.

Magic Moment: "The Narcissist" pinned "Mr. Perfect" at WM9—and left with four bikini-clad ladies.

Tragic Moment: Luger put his hands on special referee Hennig, who disqualified him and ruined his chance of taking Yokozuna's WWF title at WM10.

MABEL (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Who was better, Mabel or Viscera? We say he needed Mo.

Magic Moment: He was the dominant force when Men on a Mission beat The Quebecers by countout at WM10.

Tragic Moment: Viscera pinned Tazz in the opening minute of the WM16 Hardcore title battle royal, only to be pinned by Funaki at 7:13.

DEAN MALENKO (0-1)

WM Relevance: Malenko teamed with Eddie Guerrero and Perry Saturn to face Too Cool and Chyna at WM16.

Magic Moment: He went through the curtain and realized he was at WrestleMania instead of WCW Uncensored.

Tragic Moment: Chyna punched the groins of Malenko and Saturn simultaneously at the 8:45 mark.

SANTINO MARELLA (1-0)

WM Relevance: Both Santino and Santina have been much funnier than Doink at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He watched from an undisclosed location as his sister, Santina, won the WM25 Diva battle royal.

Tragic Moment: When Marella prevented Maria Kanellis from pinning Beth Phoenix during a 10-Diva tag match at WM24, Jerry Lawler dropped him with a right hand. Later, Snoop Dogg clotheslined him.

RICK MARTEL (2-4-1)

WM Relevance: He fed off the crowd and brought a high energy level to every match.

Magic Moment: Martel teamed with Tom Zenk to defeat Don Muraco and Bob Orton in the opener of WM3.

Tragic Moment: He and Jake Roberts spent most of the time groping around in the dark during their blindfold match at WM7—one of the all-time duds.

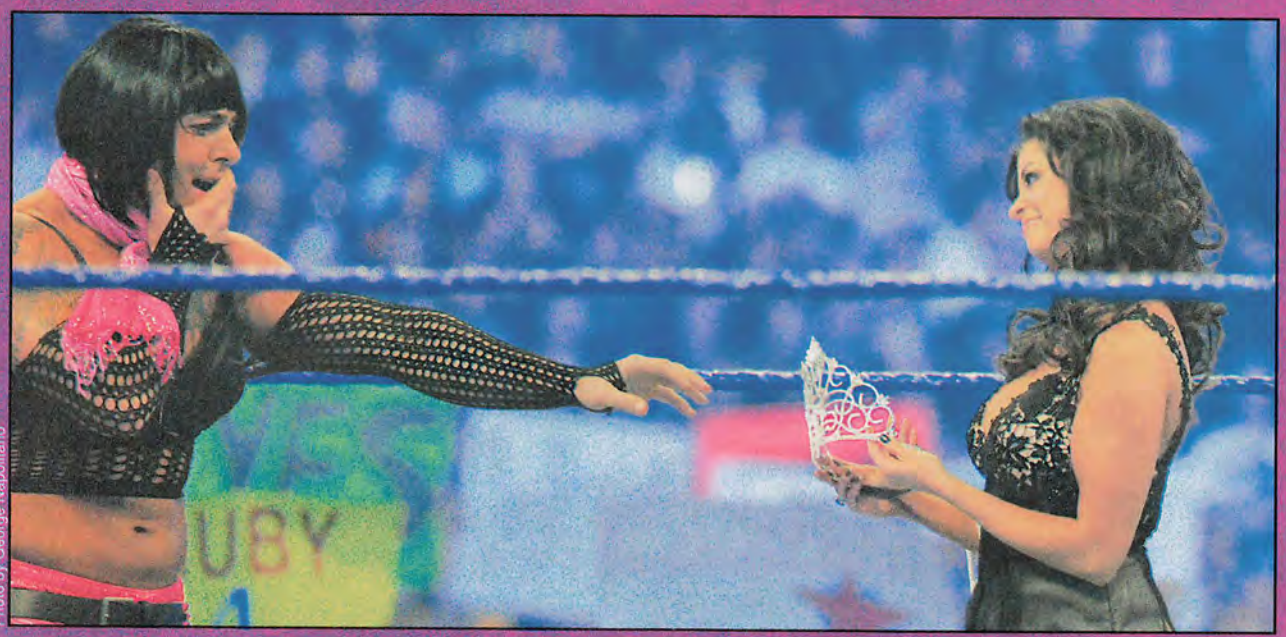


Photo by George Napolitano

Santina wins one for her twin brother

SHERRI MARTEL (0-1)

WM Relevance: Too bad her subservient roles to other superstars overshadowed her own talents.

Magic Moment: She and Randy Savage made a glamorous entrance at WM6 prior to their mixed tag against Dusty Rhodes and Sapphire. They truly were the king and queen of the WWF.

Tragic Moment: Sherri attacked Savage after his retirement match loss to The Ultimate Warrior, prompting Elizabeth to emerge and send her scurrying.

Sherri Martel confronts Dusty Rhodes at WM6

MARYSE (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Maryse failed to have any standout moments during either of her 'Mania appearances.

Magic Moment: She teamed with Michelle McCool, Layla, Alicia Fox, and Vickie Guerrero to defeat Mickie James, Kelly Kelly, Gail Kim, Beth Phoenix, and Eve Torres at WM26.

Tragic Moment: Hardly anyone noticed her in the WM25 Diva battle royal.

ASHLEY MASSARO (0-2)

WM Relevance: Both of her 'Mania appearances were overshadowed by lumberjills around the ring.

Magic Moment: Women's champ Melina went for a tilt-a-whirl suplex, but Ashley countered with a dazzling flying headscissors during her losing yet valiant effort at WM23.

Tragic Moment: Fans were distracted by a brief power failure when she teamed with Maria to face Beth Phoenix and Melina at WM24.

CHRIS MASTERS (0-1)

WM Relevance: Masters has failed to gain traction in WWE despite two stints, let alone earn a standout moment at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: The fans got behind Masters when he and partner Carlito got into a heated argument after their match at WM22.

Tragic Moment: They were arguing because they got steamrolled by World tag champs The Big Show and Kane.

MAVEN (1-0-1)

WM Relevance: He didn't seem quite ready for the WrestleMania stage and his match against Goldust was less than hardcore.

Magic Moment: Maven evoked the 24/7 rule and pinned Christian for the Hardcore title at WM18.

Tragic Moment: He had lost the Hardcore belt during his title defense against Goldust earlier in the evening when Spike Dudley evoked the 24/7 and pinned *him*.

FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. (1-0)

WM Relevance: Mayweather is one of the few celebrities who seemed to have a marketable persona that would make it in the wrestling business.

Magic Moment: He knocked out The Big Show with a pair of brass knucks at WM24.

Tragic Moment: The welterweight actually threw a hard punch at Big Show, who blocked it with his own hand, like a baseball in a catcher's mitt.

MELINA (2-0-BR)

WM Relevance: The Latin star has failed to regain the momentum she had at WM23.

Magic Moment: Women's champ Melina seemed to have Ashley Massaro at her mercy in a bow-and-arrow hold en route to victory at WM23.

Tragic Moment: Melina was humiliated by Maria Kanellis' bronco buster, although Melina and Beth Phoenix ultimately defeated Maria and Ashley.

MICHELLE McCOOL (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: McCool won't be taken seriously as a female wrestler until she survives a singles match in the glaring 'Mania spotlight.

Magic Moment: Beth Phoenix was about to do some real bodily damage to Vickie Guerrero during the 10-Diva tag match at WM26, but McCool made precision intervention, smacking "The Glamazon" with a high kick.

Tragic Moment: McCool and Mickie James eliminated each other simultaneously during the WM25 Diva battle royal.

DREW McINTYRE (0-1)

WM Relevance: McIntyre's placement in the Money in the Bank ladder match indicated the ever-fading prestige of the Intercontinental title.

Magic Moment: It seemed that McIntyre was about to win the MITB briefcase in record time at WM26 ... until Matt Hardy tipped over the ladder.

Tragic Moment: Hardy tipped McIntyre over *again*, with the Intercontinental champ crotching himself on the top rope. Damn that Hardy!

VELVET McINTYRE (0-1)

WM Relevance: Did she even bother to hit the showers?

Magic Moment: McIntyre hit Women's champ Fabulous Moolah with a barrage of dropkicks and elbows, followed by a bodyslam at WM2.

Tragic Moment: She missed a big splash and Moolah picked up the easy win.

SHANE McMAHON (2-0)

WM Relevance: He didn't have a great physique for wrestling, but his high-impact style more than made up for that.

Magic Moment: Shane leaped from one turnbuckle toward another to dropkick a sitting trash can in Vince McMahon's face at WM17.

Tragic Moment: He was about to perch himself on the top turnbuckle when X-Pac dropkicked him, causing him to land groin-first on the top rope during his European title defense at WM15.

VINCE McMAHON (0-4)

WM Relevance: It wouldn't exist without him.

Magic Moment: McMahon leg-dropped Hulk Hogan, the man who helped him turn the company into an international juggernaut, through a table at WM19.

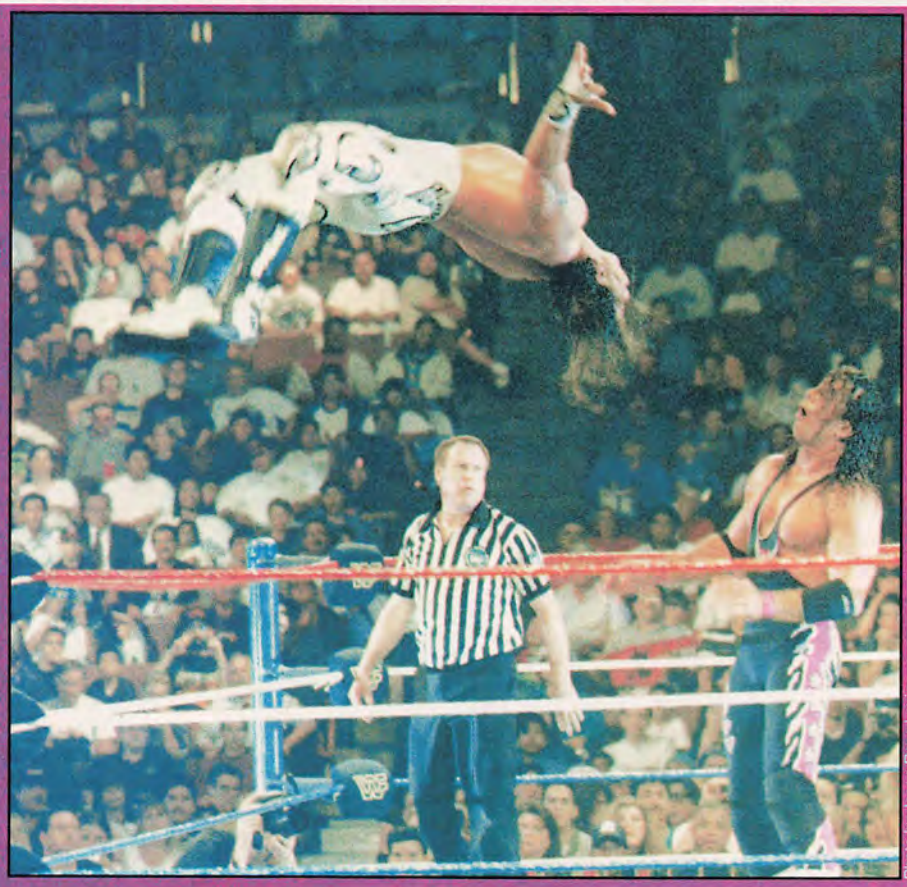


Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

HBK takes flight and Bret Hart is too stunned to react

Tragic Moment: Linda nailed Vince in the grapefruits, which turned the momentum, enabling Shane to beat his dad at WM17.

ROSA MENDES (BR)

WM Relevance: She was the Hispanic equivalent of the very forgettable Joy Giovanni in the WM25 Diva battle royal.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: She was the third Diva eliminated, courtesy of The Bella Twins.

MARC MERO (1-0)

WM Relevance: He was right to be envious of his wife. Sable made more 'Mania appearances than he did.

Magic Moment: A jealous Mero reluctantly raised Sable's hand after they defeated Goldust and Luna Vachon.

Tragic Moment: Sable used Mero's trademark TKO for the victory, further straining their marriage.

SHAWN MICHAELS (6-11)

WM Relevance: Only The Undertaker has appeared more times at 'Mania, but Michaels has had more great matches than anyone.

Magic Moment: Michaels was a glorious sight as he rappelled down to the ring at WM12. Just over an hour later, he would defeat Bret Hart for the WWF title.

Tragic Moment: He was squashed by Akeem, who led The Twin Towers to a win over The Rockers at WM5.

CANDICE MICHELLE (0-1)

WM Relevance: She won *PWI's* Woman of the Year Award?

Magic Moment: Candice savored the whistles and hoots from approximately 12,000 (the estimated number of males in attendance) prior to her *Playboy* Pillow Fight against Torrie Wilson at WM22.

Tragic Moment: Wilson pinned her with a schoolgirl roll-up at 3:54.

TAKA MICHINOKU (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: His impact would have been greater if the light heavyweight division had received a bigger push.

Magic Moment: Michinoku's thrilling win over Aguila helped condition WWF fans for the future concept of cruiserweight wrestling.

Tragic Moment: He was one of the few participants *not* to win the Hardcore title during the WM16 hardcore battle royal.

BUTCH MILLER (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Bushwhackers were always a hit with the fans.

Magic Moment: He and Luke Williams kept The Rougeau Brothers reeling with their bizarre offense at WM5, winning the match at 5:10.

Tragic Moment: Imagine being eliminated by Jim Cornette and Brother Love in a battle royal! It happened to Butch in the WM17.

MR. T (2-0)

WM Relevance: His star-power is what made WrestleMania a mainstream phenomenon.

Magic Moment: Mr. T lifted Roddy Piper onto his shoulders for a perfectly executed airplane spin at WM1, an image that made newspapers across the country.

Tragic Moment: He brought zero energy to his boxing match against Roddy Piper at WM2, to the point that fans were cheering the hated Scotsman.

THE MIZ (1-0)

WM Relevance: His impact on WM27 will be much greater, obviously.

Magic Moment: He and The Big Show retained the WWE World tag title against John Morrison and R-Truth in the opener of WM26.

Tragic Moment: Miz seemed overwhelmed by Morrison and R-Truth, and Big Show had to make a number of saves.

MO (1-0)

WM Relevance: Thank goodness for Mo that he had Mabel in his corner.

Magic Moment: He got a heck of a groove on during Men on a Mission's match against The Quebecers at WM10.

Tragic Moment: When he wasn't dancing, he was getting beat up.

FABULOUS MOOLAH (1-0)

WM Relevance: Moolah was trying to pass the torch to Wendi Richter at WM1, but her inconsequential match against Velvet McIntyre at WM2 proved that effort was unsuccessful.

Magic Moment: Fab Moo simply sidestepped McIntyre's attempted splash and quickly covered her to retain the WWF Women's title at 1:25.

Tragic Moment: All of the scheming and conniving by Moolah and Capt. Lou Albano came to naught when their gal, Lelani Kai, lost the Women's belt to Richter at WM1. They threw a hellacious fit at ringside.

SHANNON MOORE (BR)

WM Relevance: It's hard to say, considering he performed at WM for only a couple of minutes.

Magic Moment: The spotlight was on Shannon Moore when he kicked off the WM20 cruiserweight open against Ultimo Dragon.

Tragic Moment: The spotlight was still on Moore when Ultimo pinned him in short order.

PEDRO MORALES (BR)

WM Relevance: It's nice that one of WWE's most overlooked legends is part of the official WrestleMania record.

Magic Moment: He got to give his half-hearted fist pump into the air at WM2.

Tragic Moment: Morales and football great Harvey Martin eliminated each other at that event's battle royal.

Mr. T gave Roddy Piper—and all of wrestling—a lift

JOHN MORRISON (0-1)

WM Relevance: He has never wrestled in a singles match at 'Mania, in either dark or PPV matches.

Magic Moment: Morrison thought he had the WWE World tag title in his grasp when he went for the Starship Pain against The Miz, only to have The Big Show intervene.

Tragic Moment: Big Show later blind-tagged himself in and punched out Morrison for the pinfall.

RICK MORTON (BR)

WM Relevance: It was more of a cameo appearance, rather than a lasting impact.

Magic Moment: Their last high-profile moment in the business was on the WrestleMania stage.

Tragic Moment: Morton was tossed mid-way through the WM14 tag team battle royal, eliminating The Rock 'n' Roll Express.

MOSH (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: The Headbangers received a mighty push, even a win at 'Mania, but weren't allowed to develop into full maturity in the WWF.

Magic Moment: He and Thrasher defeated Doug Furnas and Phil Lafon, The Godwinns, and The New Blackjacks at WM13.

Tragic Moment: They failed to outlast even Too Hot at the WM14 tag team battle royal.

DON MURACO (1-2-1)

WM Relevance: WrestleMania simply didn't feature Muraco at his best. He was red-hot just a few years earlier.

Magic Moment: Muraco embarrassed "Canada's Strongest Man" when he overpowered Dino Bravo in the opening round of the WWF title tournament at WM4.

Tragic Moment: He lost to Ted DiBiase in the next round.

REY MYSTERIO JR. (4-2)

WM Relevance: After losing his first two 'Mania outings, Mysterio turned it around at WM21 and hasn't lost since.

Magic Moment: The ultimate underdog captured the World title at WM22 and dedicated his win to the late Eddie Guerrero.

Tragic Moment: He was on the verge of winning the cruiserweight title from Matt Hardy at WM19 until Shannon Moore interfered in the match.

JIM NEIDHART (3-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Neidhart's relevance was primarily as a member of The Hart Foundation.

Magic Moment: He made it to the final three of the WM2 battle royal. Andre the Giant eliminated Neidhart and then Bret Hart to claim the victory.

Tragic Moment: Jerry Sags knocked Neidhart in the head with a motorcycle helmet, enabling Brian Knobs to score the pinfall and capture the WWF tag title from The Hart Foundation.

NATALYA NEIDHART (BR)

WM Relevance: Natalya has the potential to shine brighter than her dad at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: She appeared alongside 24 other Divas on the WrestleMania stage for the WM25 Diva battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Beth Phoenix eliminated Neidhart at that event.

JAMIE NOBLE (BR)

WM Relevance: Noble provided fast and furious action, which was his job at WM20.

Magic Moment: He forced Ultimo Dragon—the master himself—into submission with the dragon sleeper during that event's cruiserweight open.

Tragic Moment: Noble had a streak going in the cruiserweight open until Billy Kidman eliminated him with a BK Bomb off the top rope.

Photo by George Napolitano

Mysterio Jr. hugs the World title after beating champ Kurt Angle and Randy Orton

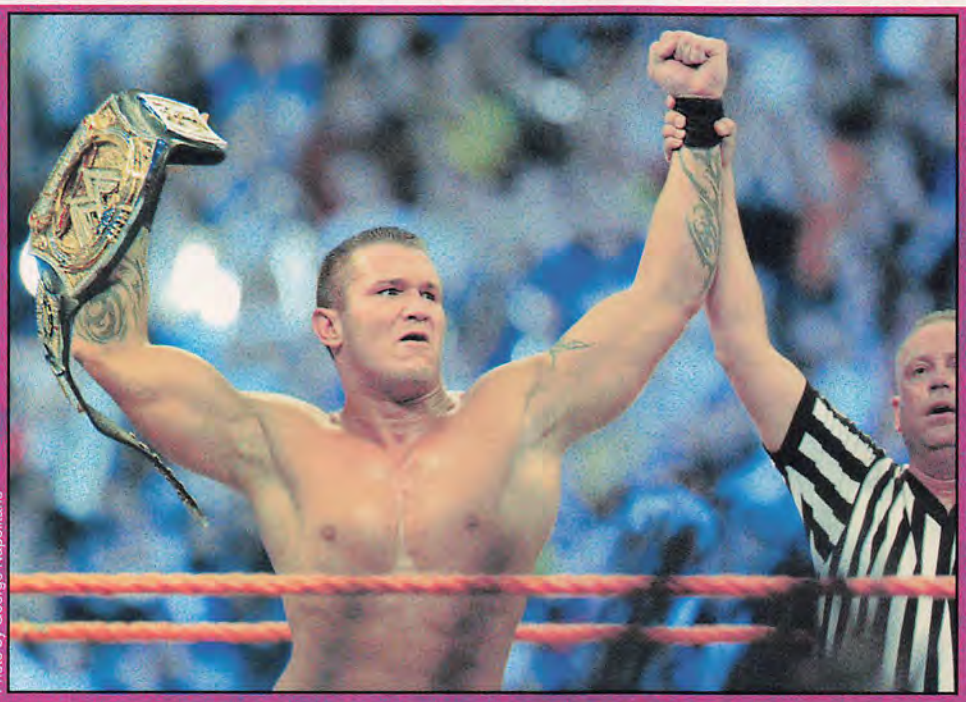


Photo by George Napolitano

Randy Orton survives challenges from John Cena and Triple-H

NUNZIO (BR)

WM Relevance: His impact was fleeting—yet dazzling—in the WM20 cruiserweight open.

Magic Moment: He seized the advantage over Jamie Noble, who had dominated most of the action in the open to that point.

Tragic Moment: Noble flattened Nunzio with a senton splash, causing him to be counted out.

PAUL ORNDORFF (0-1-1)

WM Relevance: "Mr. Wonderful" was always portrayed as being just a slight step below Hulk Hogan, although that isn't the case in historical hindsight.

Magic Moment: Orndorff was portrayed simply as Roddy Piper's sidekick leading into WM1, but the spotlight was on him at the end of the event, as he switched sides to strike a few poses with Hulk Hogan and Mr. T.

Tragic Moment: An interfering Bob Orton Jr. accidentally clubbed Orndorff in the head with his cast, setting him up for Hogan's pinfall.

BOB ORTON JR. (0-1)

WM Relevance: "Ace" was a rulebreaking stooge in the first three 'Manias.

Magic Moment: He finally made the hot tag to Don Muraco after Rick Martel and Tom Zenk double-teamed him relentlessly for nearly four minutes at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Orton was aiming for Hulk Hogan when he came off the top rope with a cast on his arm, but he nailed Paul Orndorff, causing Piper and Orndorff to go down in defeat to Hogan and Mr. T at WM1.

RANDY ORTON (3-4)

WM Relevance: He's already one-upped his father, who failed to score a win at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: Orton retained the WWE title against John Cena and Triple-H to become only the second heel in history to win a 'Mania main event. The other was HHH at WM16.

Tragic Moment: He goaded The Undertaker into a match at WM21. It turned out he wasn't quite the man to end UT's undefeated streak.

PIERRE OUELLETTE (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: The Quebecers were one of the WWF's most dominant tag champs of the mid-1990s.

Magic Moment: They were in their bully glory as they furiously double-teamed Mo at WM10.

Tragic Moment: When Men on a Mission regained the advantage, Pierre and Jacques resorted to a countout loss to save their WWF tag belts.

DALLAS PAGE (1-0)

WM Relevance: It's almost heartwarming to know that Page won big in his one and only in-ring WM appearance. No one appreciated it more than him.

Magic Moment: DDP dropped a Diamond Cutter on Christian to retain the European title at WM19.

Tragic Moment: He almost forgot to put gas in his pink Cadillac prior to driving Rhythm 'n' Blues to the ring at WM6.

CHUCK PALUMBO (1-0)

WM Relevance: His only 'Mania appearance wasn't just a win, but a win over three of the most popular teams in WWE history.

Magic Moment: Chuck and Billy Gunn defeated The APA, The Dudley Boyz, and The Hardy Boyz at WM18, a win that propelled them to the *PWI* Tag Team of the Year Award for 2002.

Tragic Moment: Rico wasn't around to tie his hair into those Heidi braids.

KEN PATERA (BR)

WM Relevance: He was an ex-con out for vengeance against the Heenan family. Was this WrestleMania or *Deathwish III*?

Magic Moment: The Olympic strongman eliminated both Nikolai Volkoff and Boris Zukhov in the WM4 battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Eventual winner Bad News Brown soon maneuvered Patera over the top rope.

MIGUEL PEREZ JR. (BR)

WM Relevance: This second-generation star proudly represented Puerto Rico at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He and Savio Vega were the first team eliminated in the WM14 battle royal, thanks to Savio.

BETH PHOENIX (1-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Win or lose, Phoenix always dominates her matches at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: Phoenix pinned Maria Kanellis, sending Maria and Ashley Massaro down to defeat at WM26.

Tragic Moment: Santina Marella eliminated Beth and Melina to win the WM25 battle royal.

RODDY PIPER (2-4-1)

WM Relevance: All of his 'Mania appearances were treated as major happenings, and, because of the excitement he brought to his feuds, that's exactly what they turned out to be.

Magic Moment: Piper was about to bash Bret Hart with the timekeeper's bell, but the angels of his better nature took over, and he threw the bell aside in favor of a sleeperhold. The fact that Hart pinned Piper a few minutes later made R.P.'s gesture more dramatic.

Tragic Moment: The "Rowdy Scot" was back at WM19, standing in the ring and about to hit Vince McMahon with a pipe, but he instead blasted Hulk Hogan. This was a case of the demons of his dark side taking over.

MONTEL VONTAVIOUS PORTER (0-4)

WM Relevance: He went from a classic match against U.S. champ Chris Benoit at WM23 to being thrown into Money in the Bank ladder matches for the following three years.

Magic Moment: MVP kept pace with Benoit hold-for-hold at WM23, even escaping the Crippler Crossface, before finding himself on the wrong end of a diving headbutt.

Tragic Moment: Just prior to the MITB match at WM24, Porter was surprised by the unannounced return of old rival Matt Hardy, who took MVP off the ladder with a Twist of Fate.

JIM POWERS (BR)

WM Relevance: Had The Young Stallions—the team he formed with Paul Roma—received a bigger push, he might have made some kind of impact.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Sadly, no one was surprised when he was eliminated from the WM4 battle royal.

TOM PRICHARD (1-0)

WM Relevance: As a journeyman wrestler in the territorial days and as a trainer for the WWF's developmental system, he was the respected Dr. Tom Prichard. At WrestleMania, all of that added up to Zip.

Magic Moment: The Bodydonnas beat The Godwinns for the WWF tag title at WM12.

Tragic Moment: He couldn't go home with Sunny.

Roddy Piper may have been a little too kind to Bret Hart

CM PUNK (2-2)

WM Relevance: He has established himself as the greatest Money in the Bank competitor ever.

Magic Moment: At WM25, Punk became the only man to win two MITB ladder matches.

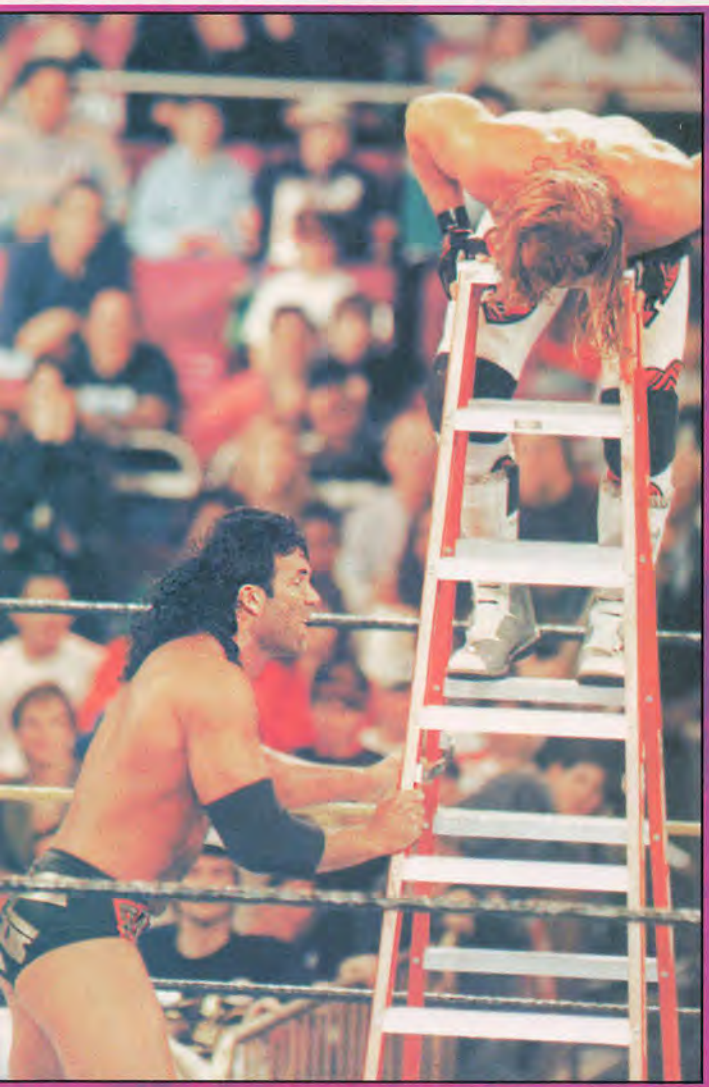
Tragic Moment: Punk almost won his first MITB match at WM24, but Mr. Kennedy knocked him off the ladder just seconds before grabbing the briefcase for his own.

HARLEY RACE (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: WWF fans got to see only a faded glimmer of what made Race great.

Magic Moment: Race beat Junkyard Dog at WM3, solidifying his status as King of the Ring.

Tragic Moment: JYD refused to bow down before the King, and instead chased Race and Bobby Heenan around the ring and then strutted around in Race's royal garb.



Scott Hall vs. Shawn Michaels set the benchmark for ladder matches

RAZOR RAMON (3-1)

WM Relevance: For a few years there, his ladder match against Shawn Michaels was considered the greatest bout in WrestleMania history.

Magic Moment: Ramon retained his Intercontinental title against Shawn Michaels before a stunned MSG crowd.

Tragic Moment: Scott Hall was out of step but still a gamer when Steve Austin trounced him at WM18.

RAVEN (0-1)

WM Relevance: He was only a bit player, considering he reached his creative and physical peak in ECW.

Magic Moment: The low-speed chase with The Big Show and Kane chasing Raven in golf carts at WM17 was so bad it was good.

Tragic Moment: As manager Johnny Polo, he pulled his Quebecers out of the ring for the cheap countout to save their WWF tag belts from Men on a Mission.

THE RED ROOSTER (1-0)

WM Relevance: How can Terry Taylor watch any of his Red Rooster matches with pride, even if one did take place at WrestleMania?

Magic Moment: He trounced former manager Bobby Heenan in 42 seconds at WM5.

Tragic Moment: One reason the Rooster fired Heenan was for giving him such a humiliating gimmick. But, even at WM5, he was still using it!

BUTCH REED (1-1)

WM Relevance: The quality of his matches was fine, but there should have been a few more 'Manias in this great athlete's career.

Magic Moment: He beat Koko B. Ware convincingly at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Reed spent a little too much time on the top turnbuckle and was caught by Randy Savage, who went on to defeat "The Natural" and advance in the WWF title tournament at WM4.

WILLIAM REGAL (0-2)

WM Relevance: WrestleMania lives and dies based on its main events. Great mid-card matches aren't as important, and that explains why Regal has made relatively few WM appearances.

Magic Moment: Regal turned a full-nelson into a German suplex, stunning Rob Van Dam at WM18 and nearly taking the Intercontinental belt.

Tragic Moment: He couldn't escape RVD's Five-Star Frog Splash.

CODY RHODES (0-1)

WM Relevance: Rhodes faced Randy Orton and Ted DiBiase Jr. in a three-way at WM26.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: He broke up DiBiase's pin attempt on Orton, provoking an argument between the two. In the end, Orton punted Rhodes in the head and dropped DiBiase with an RKO for the win. It was a miserable outing for Rhodes.

DUSTY RHODES (1-0)

WM Relevance: WrestleMania history wouldn't be complete without at least one appearance by the "American Dream."

Magic Moment: Dusty got down with sweet Sapphire and Elizabeth after he and Sapphire beat Randy Savage and Sensational Sherri—with Elizabeth's help—at WM6.

Tragic Moment: He realized Sapphire really was going to be his partner.

RHYNO (0-1)

WM Relevance: Rhyno teamed with Chris Benoit in a three-way match also involving Los Guerreros and WWE tag champs Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas.

Magic Moment: Rhyno gored Chavo and the WWE tag title seemed as if it belonged to him and Benoit.

Tragic Moment: Shelton Benjamin tagged himself in and covered Guerrero for the pinfall, denying Rhyno and Benoit the victory.

WENDI RICHTER (1-0)

WM Relevance: In terms of athleticism and style, Richter is the standard by which modern Divas are measured.

Magic Moment: Camera bulbs flashed as Wendi Richter hugged Cyndi Lauper following her Women's title win over Lelani Kai at WM1.

Tragic Moment: Fabulous Moolah was stomping a mud-hole into Richter at ringside until Lauper chased her off.

RIKISHI (2-2)

WM Relevance: Fatu and The Sultan didn't have much of an impact on 'Mania, but the fun-loving Rikishi certainly did.

Magic Moment: Only wrestling journalists would consider Rikishi giving Pete Rose the stinkface at WM16 a moment of magic.

Tragic Moment: He was saddled with a bad gimmick—that of The Sultan—and failed to beat Intercontinental champion Rocky Maivia at WM13.

ROAD DOGG (1-2)

WM Relevance: Jesse James scored his only 'Mania win as a singles competitor, not as a member of The New Age Outlaws.

Magic Moment: He retained the Intercontinental title against former champs Goldust, Ken Shamrock, and Val Venis at WM15.

Tragic Moment: Chainsaw Charlie hoisted a battered Road Dogg and Billy Gunn on a forklift and dropped them in a dumpster to win the WWF tag title for himself and Cactus Jack.

JAKE ROBERTS (3-4-1)

WM Relevance: No other wrestler has appeared at 'Mania as many times without ever winning a title in WWE.

Magic Moment: Roberts beat Andre the Giant at WM5. That's an awesome achievement, even if it were by disqualification.

Tragic Moment: Alice Cooper wasn't much help for Roberts, who failed to beat The Honky Tonk Man for the Intercontinental title at WM3.

Photo by Joe Zanolfe

The Rock vs. Hulk Hogan was a surprise Match of the Year

THE ROCK (4-4)

WM Relevance: Critics suggested that The Rock was suffering from a "WrestleMania curse," but he turned that around beginning with a WWF title victory over Steve Austin at WM17.

Magic Moment: The Rock defeated Hulk Hogan to become, in his words, "the absolute best ever" at WM18.

Tragic Moment: He made the fatal mistake of trusting Vince McMahon, who jumped in the ring and smacked him with a steel chair, enabling Triple-H to retain the WWF title in a four-way at WM16.

RODNEY (BR)

WM Relevance: Shane McMahon's childhood friends didn't receive much corporate backing by the time WM16 rolled around.

Magic Moment: Rodney pinned Funaki for the Hardcore title at that event's hardcore battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Running buddy Joey Abs pinned him immediately thereafter.

PAUL ROMA (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: His 'Mania record didn't indicate that he would be future Horsemen material.

Magic Moment: Roma was one of the final five participants in the WM4 battle royal.

Tragic Moment: He fell prey to The Legion of Doom's Doomsday Device at WM7, ending Power & Glory's growing momentum.

JACQUES ROUGEAU (1-3-BR)

WM Relevance: The Rougeaus were more credible in their three defeats than Jacques was in his one singles win.

Magic Moment: He shocked Tito Santana with a cattle prod en route to an electrifying victory at WM7.

Tragic Moment: The Rougeaus didn't look so fabulous when they lost to The Bushwhackers at WM5.

RAYMOND ROUGEAU (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: Unlike his younger brother Jacques, Raymond's WWF career was exclusive to his work as part of the Fabulous Rougeaus tag team.

Magic Moment: He eliminated tag team rival B. Brian Blair in the WM4 battle royal.

Tragic Moment: The Rougeaus lost to The Bushwhackers at WM5. Bet that wouldn't have happened at the Montreal Forum.

RICK RUDE (2-0)

WM Relevance: Rude beat two of the WWF's most famous stars, The Ultimate Warrior and Jimmy Snuka, at WM.

Magic Moment: He pinned the seemingly invincible Ultimate Warrior for the Intercontinental title at WM5.

Tragic Moment: Rude relied on Bobby Heenan to hold the Warrior's leg as he scored the pinfall. If Rude had managed to beat him clean, it would've made him the WWF's top star.

TERRI RUNNELS (0-1)

WM Relevance: She served her function in the highly sexualized Attitude Era.

Magic Moment: Terri pinned The Kat in 2:25 at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Kat ripped off Terri's sheer black bodystocking after the match, revealing a barely visible skin-color thong underneath!

R-TRUTH (0-1)

WM Relevance: He made his only 'Mania appearance with John Morrison, challenging Sho-Miz for the WWE World tag title at WM26.

Magic Moment: R-Truth and Morrison looked sharp as they double-teamed The Miz in the early going.

Tragic Moment: He attempted a flying cross-bodyblock against The Big Show, who caught him easily. What was he thinking?

SABLE (3-0)

WM Relevance: Through her surprisingly good performance at WM14, she helped usher in the modern era of women's wrestling.

Magic Moment: She stunned the wrestling world with her ring acumen, planting Luna Vachon with a Sable Bomb at WM14.

Tragic Moment: None.

SABU (1-0)

WM Relevance: Even in WWE, he was representing the old ECW.

Magic Moment: At the outset of WM23, he targeted Matt Striker—who turned out to be the weak link of ECW's New Breed—as the ECW Originals went on to victory.

Tragic Moment: None.

JERRY SAGS (1-1)

WM Relevance: The Nasty Boys' WWF tag title victory at WM8 was the pinnacle of their careers.

Magic Moment: Sags nailed Jim Neidhart with a motorcycle helmet and draped partner Brian Knobs' arm across "The Anvil," enabling The Nasty Boys to take The Hart Foundation's WWF tag title.

Tragic Moment: The Nasties were on the losing side of an eight-man tag match at WM8.

BRUNO SAMMARTINO (BR)

WM Relevance: The ex-WWWF champ's only WrestleMania appearance took place in the WM2 battle royal.

Magic Moment: "Da Brune" dominated for a while, eliminating Ernie Holmes and The Iron Sheik.

Tragic Moment: He was eliminated by Big John Studd.

A Sable Bomb takes out Luna Vachon

DAVID SAMMARTINO (0-0-1)

WM Relevance: This was another example of the WWF exploiting David to keep Bruno in the spotlight.

Magic Moment: The younger Sammartino dominated Brutus Beefcake for much of their bout at WM1.

Tragic Moment: Johnny Valiant interfered on Beefcake's behalf, prompting Bruno Sammartino to jump into the action. The referee disqualified both men.

SAMU (0-1)

WM Relevance: Samu and Headshrinker partner Fatu faced The Steiner Brothers at WM9.

Magic Moment: He had both Rick and Scott reeling with chops, kicks, and headbutts.

Tragic Moment: Scott caught Samu with a Frankensteiner to score the pinfall.

THE SANDMAN (1-0)

WM Relevance: He never truly forged his own reputation in WWE, and instead lived off the fumes of his ECW notoriety.

Magic Moment: The Sandman and the rest of the ECW Originals defeated The New Breed at WM23.

Tragic Moment: None.

TITO SANTANA (1-6)

WM Relevance: He was the journeyman workhorse of the early WrestleManias, appearing at seven and losing at six.

Magic Moment: Santana won the very first match at the very first WrestleMania by executing The Executioner.

Tragic Moment: He accidentally hit partner Rick Martel with a forearm, prompting Martel to abandon him during a tag match against Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard at WM5.

SAPPHIRE (1-0)

WM Relevance: Dusty Rhodes relied on his valet following her impressive 'Mania performance, making her ripe for a payoff from Ted DiBiase.

Magic Moment: She scored a lucky pinfall over Sensational Sherri during a mixed tag at WM6.

Tragic Moment: Sherri's partner, Randy Savage, took a couple of cheap shots at Sapphire, a form of male-on-female violence rarely seen in wrestling back in those days.

AKIO SATO (1-0)

WM Relevance: He and Pat Tanaka formed The Orient Express, managed by Mr. Fuji, and were The Rockers' top rivals at the time.

Magic Moment: Sato secured a tainted countout victory for The Orient Express when he threw salt into Marty Jannetty's eyes at WM6.

Tragic Moment: This occurred years later, when Sato realized he should have thrown the salt in Shawn Michaels' eyes, ensuring a spot on DVD retrospectives for generations to come.

PERRY SATURN (0-1)

WM Relevance: Saturn was a member of The Radicalz, who received high spots on the card at WM16 because of their recent defection from WCW.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Chyna humiliated Saturn and Dean Malenko during their mixed six-person match, dominating them with double-clotheslines, bodyslams, and blatant shots below the belt.

RANDY SAVAGE (6-4)

WM Relevance: The "Macho Man" was the star of Trump Plaza, headlining WM4 and WM5.

Magic Moment: He was about to succumb to Ted DiBiase's Million-Dollar Dream in the WWF title tournament final at WM4 when Hulk Hogan smashed a steel chair across DiBiase's back, giving Savage the opportunity to deliver his trademark elbowdrop off the top rope.

Tragic Moment: Savage lost a retirement match to The Ultimate Warrior at WM7 despite coming off the top rope with *five* consecutive elbowdrops.

Photo by Roy London

Randy Savage celebrates as Hulk Hogan hides the evidence

Sgt. Slaughter has Hulk Hogan on the verge of defeat

SCOTTY 2 HOTTY (2-0-BR)

WM Relevance: The Worm plus a karate chop equals at good time at 'Mania!

Magic Moment: Scotty teamed with Grandmaster Sexay and Chyna to defeat The Radicalz at WM16. It was the height of Too Cool's popularity.

Tragic Moment: He was thrown over the top rope at the WM14 tag team battle royal, which eliminated Too Hot (later Too Cool) in their first-ever pairing.

KEN SHAMROCK (0-2)

WM Relevance: The "World's Most Dangerous Man" was an important factor at three WrestleManias, serving as a special referee at WM13 and actually competing at WM14 and WM15.

Magic Moment: Shamrock forced the almighty Rock into submission with his anklelock at WM14.

Tragic Moment: The volatile Shamrock refused to break the hold after the bell, prompting the referee to reverse the decision.

SHARMELL (0-1)

WM Relevance: Sharmell had the charisma to remain relevant, even on Booker T's arm. She never belonged in a ring.

Magic Moment: She always makes a beautiful entrance.

Tragic Moment: The Boogeyman kissed her with a mouth full of worms during a handicap match at WM22.

SHEAMUS (0-1)

WM Relevance: Barring any major injury or visa issues, Sheamus should be a staple of WrestleManias for many years to come.

Magic Moment: Sheamus leveled Triple-H with a second bicycle kick that placed victory firmly within his grasp at WM26.

Tragic Moment: The former WWE champ made the rookie mistake of playing to the crowd and giving Triple-H the chance to rally and hit the Pedigree for the pinfall.

SIKA (BR)

WM Relevance: He might have been a real factor at 'Mania if his brother, Afa, had remained injury-free and they had been able to compete as a tag team.

Magic Moment: Sika was eliminated in the WM4 battle royal, but he displayed plenty of fire amid losing, as it took four men to maneuver him out of the ring.

Tragic Moment: The Wild Samoan went too far when he continued to terrorize innocent people backstage.

SKINNER (0-1)

WM Relevance: This guy went from being a bow-tied Chippendale wannabe to a greasy gator man. Only in wrestling!

Magic Moment: Skinner hit Owen Hart with his combo finisher, a spat of chew followed by the Gatorbreaker at WM8.

Tragic Moment: A blinded and repulsed Hart kicked out and rallied for the quick win.

SGT. SLAUGHTER (1-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Slaughter personified Vince McMahon's callous attempt to capitalize on the raw emotions created by the Persian Gulf War.

Magic Moment: The Sarge avenged his WWF title loss to Hulk Hogan at WM7 by throwing a fireball in his face in the locker room after the pay-per-view.

Tragic Moment: He found out the WWF would not be selling Sgt. Slaughter action figures in Iraq.

SMASH/REPO MAN (3-2-BR)

WM Relevance: Demolition was the most dominant tag team to appear at WM4, WM5, and WM6. Repo Man was never a factor at all.

Magic Moment: Smash and Ax captured the WWF tag title from Strike Force at WM4, silencing some critics who called them Road Warrior clones.

Tragic Moment: Smash and new partner Crush turned out to be a weaker team, as the new Demolition lost to Koji Kitao and Genichiro Tenyru at WM7.

DAVEY BOY SMITH (4-2-1)

WM Relevance: The British Bulldogs were one of the all-time great acts in 'Mania history. Smith's golden moment as a singles wrestler came at SummerSlam '92.

Magic Moment: He and Dynamite Kid defeated Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine for the WWF tag belts at WM2 after one of the most enthralling title chases ever.

Tragic Moment: At WM11, Smith and partner Lex Luger seemed every bit as overmuscled, overblown, and overrated as their critics said they were.

SNIPER (BR)

WM Relevance: Thank goodness for the WM14 tag team battle royal! Sniper wouldn't have even been a footnote in 'Mania history without it.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: Former ally Kurrgan cost them the WM14 tag team battle royal by tossing Sniper and Recon out of the ring.

AL SNOW (0-2)

WM Relevance: Snow and "Head" were impact players during the hardcore craze and provided entertaining moments at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He cracked both Bob Holly and defending Hardcore champ Billy Gunn over the head with hockey sticks to kick off WM15.

Tragic Moment: Gunn caught him with the Famouser, inadvertently setting him up for a pinfall by Holly.

JIMMY SNUKA (0-2)

WM Relevance: Snuka, Sgt. Slaughter, and Junkyard Dog were among the WWF fan favorites whose popularity peaked just before the WrestleMania era.

Magic Moment: His moment didn't occur during a match, but when he simply walked to the ring to salute the fans with his "I love you" gesture at WM5. They hadn't forgotten him.

Tragic Moment: He became The Undertaker's first famous victim at WM7.

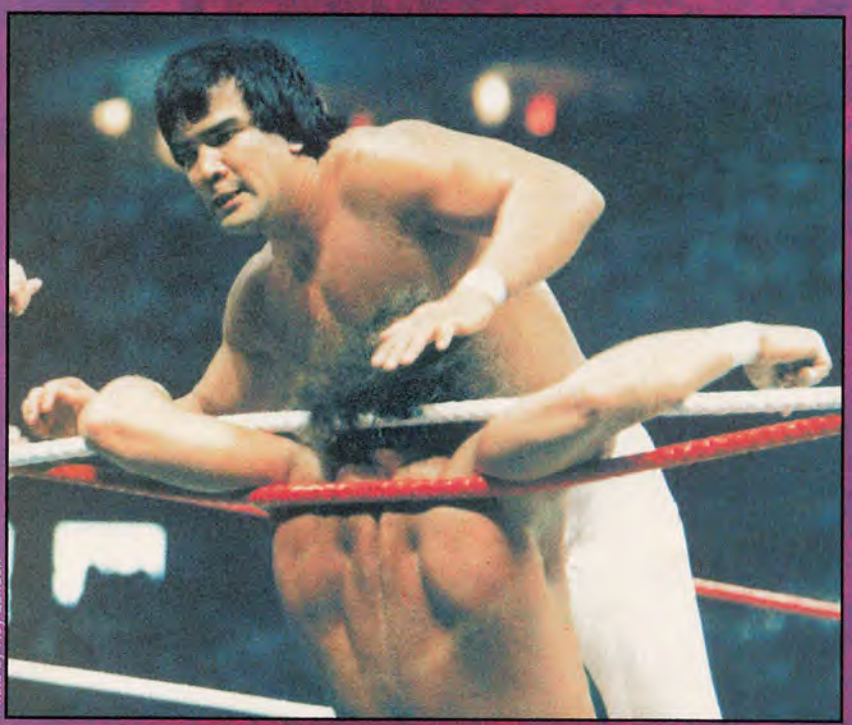


Photo by Roy London

Steamboat has Savage at his mercy

DAN SPIVEY (BR)

WM Relevance: This was a transitional period for Spivey, who was between U.S. Express stints with partner Mike Rotundo—and he never returned to 'Mania again.

Magic Moment: He combined forces with B. Brian Blair and Hillbilly Jim to eliminate strongman Ted Arcidi from the WM2 battle royal.

Tragic Moment: The Iron Sheik sent Spivey over the top rope moments later.

RICK STEAMBOAT (3-1)

WM Relevance: He and Randy Savage had the greatest WrestleMania match of all-time, a distinction that was inarguable—at least until Razor Ramon-Shawn Michaels at WM10.

Magic Moment: Randy Savage was about to inflict more damage to Steamboat's larynx with the timekeeper's bell, but George Steele intervened, enabling "The Dragon" to roll up the "Macho Man" for the Intercontinental title at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Steamboat lost to Greg Valentine in the opening round of the WM4 WWF title tournament.

GEORGE STEELE (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: "The Animal" was an outlandish personality that made the early 'Manias such unique events, especially among casual fans.

Magic Moment: He made the save in perhaps the greatest match in 'Mania history, preventing Randy Savage from ramming Rick Steamboat's larynx with the timekeeper's bell, giving Steamboat time to make the roll-up pinfall at WM3.

Tragic Moment: Savage pinned Steele at WM2.

RICK STEINER (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Steiner Brothers' match against The Headshrinkers at WM9 was one of the stiffest in the history of the event.

Magic Moment: Steiner was seated on Fatu's shoulders when he caught Samu coming off the top rope with a belly-to-belly. Amazing!

Tragic Moment: None.

SCOTT STEINER (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Steiner Brothers had the potential to be a long-running WWE tag team, as evidenced by their victory at WM9, but Scott's volatility caused management to sour on them.

Magic Moment: Scott executed the Frankensteiner on Samu and scored the pinfall to a thunderous reaction at Caesars Palace.

Tragic Moment: None.

TRISH STRATUS (2-2)

WM Relevance: She was the most important female star in 'Mania history, evolving women's wrestling to a level higher than eye candy.

Magic Moment: Stratus tied Fabulous Moolah's record of four Women's title reigns by defeating Jazz and defending champ Victoria in a critically acclaimed match at WM19.

Tragic Moment: The fans began to boo Stratus during her title defense against Mickie James at WM22. Not surprisingly, Stratus lost her belt that night.

MATT STRIKER (0-1)

WM Relevance: The former teacher turned out to be the weakest link in the New Breed when they challenged the ECW Originals at WM23.

Magic Moment: He was able to walk under his own power after taking a heck of a beating.

Tragic Moment: Rob Van Dam struck Striker with a Toshiaki Kawada-style kick to the face and executed a monkey flip, setting him up for Tommy Dreamer's DDT. Then RVD delivered a Five-Star Frog Splash for the easy pinfall.

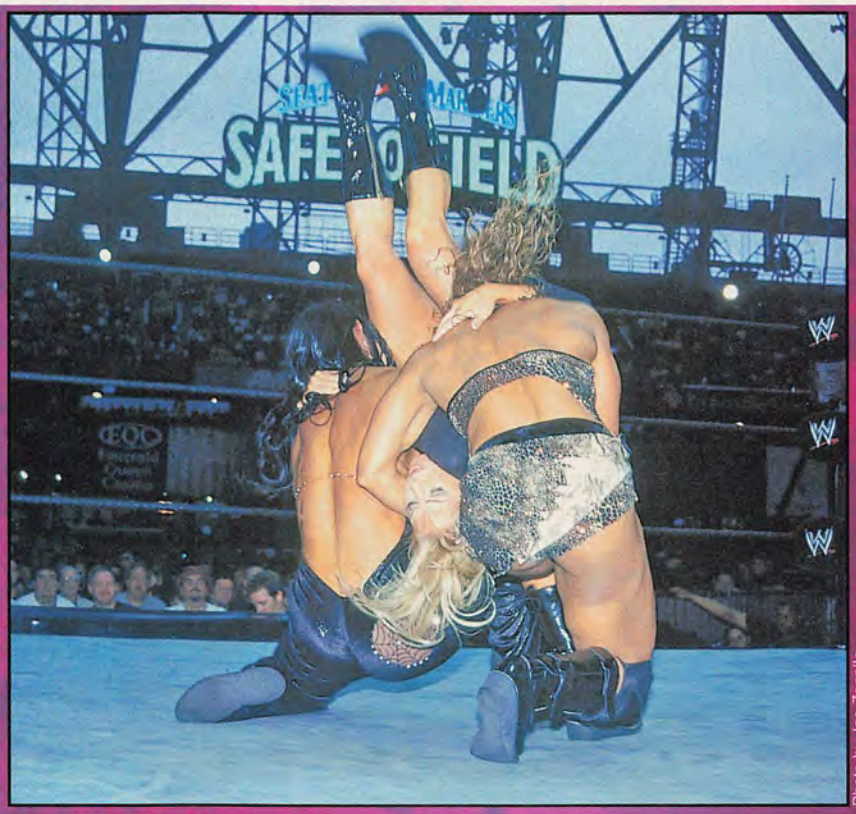


Photo by Joe Zanolle

Trish Stratus overcame the double-team efforts of Victoria and Jazz

BIG JOHN STUDD (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: He was best known as Andre the Giant's archrival, losing a $10,000 Bodyslam Challenge to Andre at WM1.

Magic Moment: Studd *hip-tossed* William "The Refrigerator" Perry over the top rope in the WM2 battle royal.

Tragic Moment: He accepted Perry's sportsmanlike handshake, only to have the Chicago Bear pull him out of the ring.

SUNNY (0-1)

WM Relevance: She was far more effective as a breathtaking managerial vixen than an in-ring combatant.

Magic Moment: Sunny flashed her derriere at Phineas Godwinn, enabling Skip to score the pinfall and win the vacant WWF tag title for The Bodydonnas at WM12.

Tragic Moment: Beth Phoenix quickly disposed of her in the WM25 Divas battle royal.

TAJIRI (0-1)

WM Relevance: He was a burst of excitement in the final minutes of the cruiserweight open at WM20.

Magic Moment: Tajiri briefly locked Rey Mysterio Jr. in the ropes with a tarantula.

Tragic Moment: He spewed his poisonous green mist at Mysterio, but sprayed his partner, Akio, instead. Mysterio quickly pinned him.

TAMA (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Islanders were considered the underdogs against Dynamite Kid, Davey Boy Smith, and Koko B. Ware at WM4 … because Bobby Heenan was their partner.

Magic Moment: He and Haku double-teamed Koko B. Ware, helping manager Bobby Heenan score a humiliating pinfall over "The Birdman."

Tragic Moment: Tama went for a splash, but Dynamite Kid lifted his knees, giving The British Bulldogs and Ware a brief reprieve.

PAT TANAKA (1-0)

WM Relevance: The Orient Express seemed to be on the fast track to greatness and, well, The Rockers had hit the rocks.

Magic Moment: Tanaka and Akio Sato earned a countout victory over The Rockers when Sato threw salt in Marty Jannetty's eyes at WM6.

Tragic Moment: The Rockers launched him high into the sky with a monumental double backbodydrop.

TATANKA (2-0)

WM Relevance: His WM outings indicate that the WWF gave him a healthy push, even if it didn't amount to much in the long run.

Magic Moment: He pinned Rick Martel in only 4:32 at WM8.

Tragic Moment: Tatanka had Shawn Michaels so much on the defensive that the "Heartbreak Kid" intentionally got himself disqualified to save his Intercontinental title at WM9.

LAWRENCE TAYLOR (1-0)

WM Relevance: Many observers felt his appearance at WM11 saved the WWF during the mid-1990s doldrums.

Magic Moment: Taylor came off the second rope to drive a fist to the top of Bam Bam Bigelow's head and score the pinfall.

Tragic Moment: Had he stuck with wrestling, he may have become a WrestleMania headliner, and he may have averted some of the personal problems that followed.

TAZZ (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Tazz was limited to wild brawls during his 'Mania appearances, although he was capable of technical brilliance.

Magic Moment: He teamed with The APA to defeat Bull Buchanan, The Goodfather, and Val Venis at WM17.

Tragic Moment: Only a glass jar to the head by Bob Holly prevented him from winning the WM15 Hardcore title battle royal.

GENICHIRO TENRYU (1-0)

WM Relevance: Demolition and American fans were stunned when they found out first-hand why Tenryu was considered the Japanese version of Ric Flair.

Magic Moment: He dropped Smash with a sit-down power bomb for a quick pinfall victory over the once-mighty Demolition at WM7.

Tragic Moment: The typical WWF fan at the time didn't remember his name afterward.

TEST (1-2)

WM Relevance: He was given a chance to shine, but his 'Mania aspirations dimmed forever when his match against Eddie Guerrero was dubbed the most disappointing of WM17.

Magic Moment: Test walked into the ring as the defending European champion.

Tragic Moment: He got his foot tangled in the ropes and had to rely on Guerrero, Perry Saturn, and the referee to get it out. *Yikes!*

KEVIN THORN (0-1)

WM Relevance: He and the rest of the New Breed went down to the ECW Originals at WM23 ... and each faded into WWE oblivion, one by one.

Magic Moment: Thorn planted Tommy Dreamer with a wicked spinebuster.

Tragic Moment: He couldn't save Matt Striker from Rob Van Dam's Five-Star Frog Splash.

THRASHER (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: The Headbangers' win over Doug Furnas and Phil Lafon, The Blackjacks, and The Godwinns at WM13 made them the top contenders to the WWF tag title.

Magic Moment: Thrasher delivered a cannonball senton onto Phineas Godwinn to win the four-way at WM13.

Tragic Moment: They were back to the middle of the pack at the WM14 tag team battle royal.

LT did to Bam Bam Bigelow what he did to many a quarterback

TIFFANY (BR)

WM Relevance: Tiffany and Alicia Fox were ECW's sole representatives in the WM25 Diva battle royal. Too bad for ECW.

Magic Moment: None.

Tragic Moment: She was another on Beth Phoenix's long list of victims that night.

TORI (0-1)

WM Relevance: Kane's future flame challenged Women's champion Sable at WM15.

Magic Moment: Tori emerged at Philadelphia's First Union Center in one of the tightest bodysuits ever.

Tragic Moment: Nicole Bass slammed Tori to set her up for Sable's finisher, the Sable Bomb, and the pinfall at only 5:03.

EVE TORRES (0-2)

WM Relevance: Torres didn't make an impression in WWE until two weeks after WM26, when she upset Maryse for the Divas title.

Magic Moment: She and The Bella Twins eliminated Joy Giovanni in the WM25 Diva battle royal.

Tragic Moment: Torres was barely a factor—and on the losing side—of the 10-Diva tag team match at WM26.

TYPHOON (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: He was best known as Earthquake's partner in The Natural Disasters.

Magic Moment: Typhoon blew in and battered Money Inc. to help The Natural Disasters score a countout victory over the WWF tag champs at WM8.

Tragic Moment: He was betrayed by his own partner, Earthquake, who eliminated him from the WM20 gimmick battle royal.

THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR (4-1)

WM Relevance: He had many triumphs at 'Mania, but his win over the once-invincible Hulk Hogan for the WWF title placed him in another stratosphere.

Magic Moment: The Ultimate Warrior kicking out of Hogan's legdrop at WM6. Something was different this time.

Tragic Moment: Bobby Heenan held the Warrior's leg down against the ring apron at WM5, enabling Rick Rude to capture the Intercontinental title.

ULTIMO DRAGON (0-1)

WM Relevance: The Dragon's comeback from a career-threatening injury culminated at WM20.

Magic Moment: Ultimo scored the first fall of that event's cruiserweight open, dropping Shannon Moore with a Dragon DDT.

Tragic Moment: The most agile technical wizard of his era slipped both on the entranceway and again on the turnbuckles. It brought back memories of Phil Esposito slipping on the ice when being introduced in Moscow before a 1972 Canada-Russia Summit Series.

UMAGA (0-2)

WM Relevance: He and Bobby Lashley will be remembered in the same annals as T-Piper, Bigelow-Taylor, and Big Show-Mayweather, thanks to their "Battle Of The Billionaires" match involving Vince McMahon and Donald Trump.

Magic Moment: Umaga planted Lashley with a ring-shattering Samoan drop in the opening minutes of their showdown at WM23.

Tragic Moment: The "Samoan Bulldozer" charged Batista with a reckless abandon at WM24, only to be met by a spinebuster and a hefty power bomb.

UNCLE ELMER (0-1)

WM Relevance: Somehow, he seemed like the well-adjusted person in his WM2 clash against Adrian Adonis.

Magic Moment: He did a great two-step for an overall-wearing behemoth at WM2.

Tragic Moment: Hillbilly Jim's favorite uncle was on the receiving end of Adonis' diving headbutt just a few minutes later.

Hulk Hogan salutes his conqueror, The Ultimate Warrior

THE UNDERTAKER (18-0)

WM Relevance: It was once believed that no one person was bigger than WrestleMania. But The Undertaker, through The Streak, is becoming synonymous with the most important event of the year.

Magic Moment: Undertaker begged Shawn Michaels to stay down at WM26, but when the "Heartbreak Kid" refused, Undertaker reopened the gates of Hell and dropped Michaels with a second Tombstone piledriver to extend his streak to 18-0.

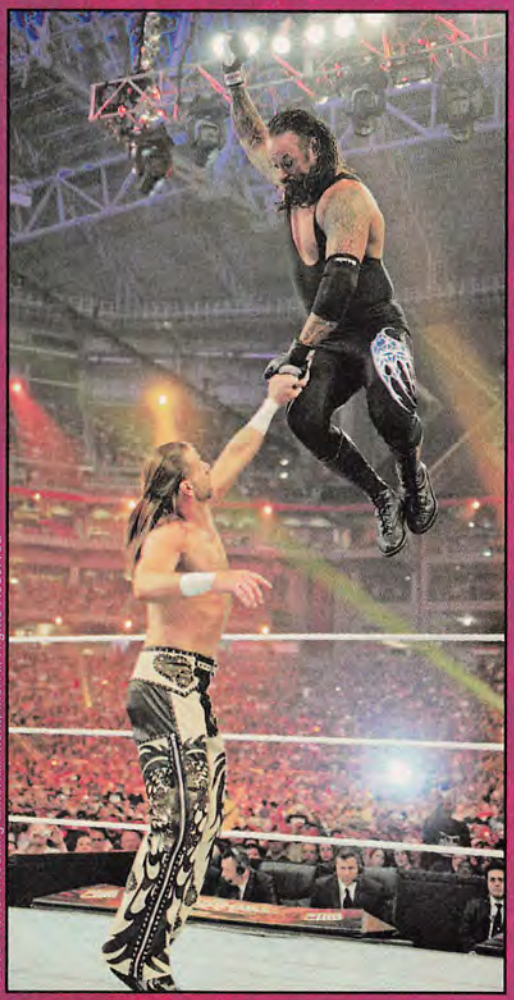
Tragic Moment: Did Undertaker really need to hang Big Bossman after their match at WM15?

LUNA VACHON (1-1)

WM Relevance: Luna was the crazed valet that men would recruit to do their dirty work. But how did Bam Bam Bigelow and Goldust endure her outside the ring?

Magic Moment: She teamed with Bigelow to beat Doink and Dink at WM10.

Tragic Moment: Sable used husband Marc Mero's trademark TKO finisher to pin Luna, sending the second-generation star and Goldust down to defeat at WM14.



Undertaker extends The Streak to 18, sending HBK into retirement

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BIG VAN VADER (1-0-1)

WM Relevance: Vader was a singles main-eventer in WCW, but he didn't have quite the same reputation in the WWF, which explains his two tag team outings at 'Mania.

Magic Moment: He teamed with Owen Hart and Davey Boy Smith to beat Ahmed Johnson, Jake Roberts, and Yokozuna at WM12.

Tragic Moment: Vader changed alliances with mixed success, joining Mankind to fight Hart and Smith to a double-count-out at WM13.

GREG VALENTINE (2-4)

WM Relevance: He excelled with the right opponents, as he proved when The Dream Team faced The British Bulldogs at WM2.

Magic Moment: Valentine stunned the Trump Plaza crowd by cradling Rick Steamboat for the surprise pinfall in the opening round of the WWF title tournament at WM4.

Tragic Moment: Earthquake squashed Valentine in 3:14 at WM7, prompting "The Hammer" to storm out of the WWF.

ROB VAN DAM (4-0)

WM Relevance: RVD boasts an impressive win-loss record. If he returned to WWE and strung together only 15 more consecutive WrestleMania victories, he could beat The Undertaker's streak!

Magic Moment: Van Dam won the Money in the Bank briefcase at WM22, proving he was in the main-event mix after taking extensive time off for knee surgery.

Tragic Moment: None.

SAVIO VEGA (0-2-BR)

WM Relevance: It's hard to believe Vega was once a highly successful singles wrestler, given the mediocrity of Los Boricuas a short time later.

Magic Moment: At WM12, Vega actually dominated most of his match against Steve Austin, whom he had already defeated several times. At least he made his mama proud for a while.

Tragic Moment: He was the first man eliminated from the WM14 tag team battle royal. His partner Miguel Perez Jr., who was forced to leave as a result, was howling mad.

VAL VENIS (0-2)

WM Relevance: Venis' officiating was far more entertaining than his actual wrestling.

Magic Moment: Terri Runnels and The Kat vied for special referee Val Venis' affections, smothering him with kisses during their catfight at WM16.

Tragic Moment: Mae Young jumped in with some tongue action, horrifying Venis and all watching.

VICTORIA (1-1)

WM Relevance: She defended the Women's title at two WrestleManias—not a bad accomplishment.

Magic Moment: Women's champ Victoria shaved Molly Holly's head as the result of a pre-match stipulation at WM20.

Tragic Moment: She tore the bottom of her pants, causing male fans to hoot during her Women's title defense against Trish Stratus and Jazz at WM19.

VIRGIL (2-0)

WM Relevance: Virgil didn't become an active wrestler in the WWF until he left the employ of Ted DiBiase.

Magic Moment: After scoring a countout win over the "Million-Dollar Man," Virgil saved an injured Roddy Piper, who was in his corner for moral support, from an attack by DiBiase and Sensational Sherri.

Tragic Moment: He failed to prevent Hulk Hogan from hitting his boss, DiBiase, with a steel chair during the WWF title tournament at WM4, which resulted in Randy Savage becoming champion.

NIKOLAI VOLKOFF (2-2-BR)

WM Relevance: Although Volkoff challenged WWWF champion Bruno Sammartino in the 1970s as Bepo Mongol, he was primarily a tag team specialist by the WrestleMania era.

Magic Moment: At WM1, Volkoff distracted the referee, enabling partner The Iron Sheik to bash Barry Windham with Freddie Blassie's cane, and then he pinned an unconscious Windham for the WWF tag team championship—the first title change in 'Mania history.

Tragic Moment: He and Boris Zukhov lost to The Hart Foundation in 19 seconds at WM6.

KERRY VON ERICH (1-0)

WM Relevance: The "Texas Tornado" was being groomed to become I-C champion at the time of his sole WrestleMania appearance at WM7. In an eerie side note, both Von Erich and Bravo would be deceased within three years.

Magic Moment: He used the discus punch to defeat Dino Bravo.

Tragic Moment: None.

KOKO B. WARE (0-3)

WM Relevance: He was a jobber to rising mid-carders, including Butch Reed and Rick Martel.

Okay, it wasn't exactly 'Mania magic, but we doubt we'll get many complaints!

Magic Moment: His bird Frankie was always over with the fans.

Tragic Moment: The Islanders dropped their manager, Bobby Heenan, on top of "The Birdman" for the winning pinfall, sending Ware and The British Bulldogs down to defeat.

THE WARLORD (0-2)

WM Relevance: He struck out as a tag team wrestler—and then a singles wrestler—at WrestleMania. Come to think of it, he didn't do well at the Royal Rumble …

Magic Moment: He came close to forcing Davey Boy Smith into submission with the full-nelson at WM7, but couldn't quite lock his fingers together.

Tragic Moment: The Powers of Pain and Mr. Fuji failed to win the WWF tag belts even with a three-on-two advantage over Demolition at WM5.

GEORGE WELLS (0-1)

WM Relevance: He left the Canadian Football League for pro wrestling in the 1970s, but was firmly on the undercard track by the time WM2 came around.

Magic Moment: He made Jake Roberts' DDT look great.

Tragic Moment: Wells foamed at the mouth when Roberts allowed his snake, Damien, to slither all over him.

LUKE WILLIAMS (1-0-BR)

WM Relevance: Williams and partner Butch Miller were among the most popular stars at WM5.

Magic Moment: Luke used his noggin—as a battering ram—to lead The Bushwhackers to victory over The Fabulous Rougeaus.

Tragic Moment: None.

TORRIE WILSON (1-0)

WM Relevance: She teamed with Sable to face Stacy Keibler and Miss Jackie in an Evening Gown match at WM20, where, interestingly, they wore lingerie instead.

Magic Moment: Wilson rolled up Miss Jackie for the pinfall.

Tragic Moment: None.

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BARRY WINDHAM (0-2)

WM Relevance: He established himself as a terrific singles wrestler in the NWA, but fans saw only glimpses of his greatness at 'Mania and in the WWF.

Magic Moment: When The Iron Sheik cracked Freddie Blassie's cane over Windham's head, and Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff stole the WWF tag belts at WM1, the fans became overwhelmingly supportive of The U.S. Express.

Tragic Moment: Windham manhandled the referee, causing The New Blackjacks to be disqualified in a four-way also involving Doug Furnas and Phil Lafon, The Godwinns, and eventual winners The Headbangers at WM13.

X-PAC (0-2)

WM Relevance: He was the fall guy for D-X in both 'Mania outings.

Magic Moment: X-Pac had the European belt within his grasp after he planted defending champ Shane McMahon with an X-Factor at WM15.

Tragic Moment: Fellow DX teammate Triple-H ran into the ring, executed the Pedigree on X-Pac, dragged Shane over for the pinfall, and joined The Corporation.

YOKOZUNA (2-3)

WM Relevance: He was the strongest heel WWF champion in history, having a huge presence at WM9 and WM10.

Magic Moment: Thanks to Mr. Fuji's salt to the eyes, Yokozuna beat Bret Hart at WM9.

Tragic Moment: Immediately after pinning Hart, Yokozuna acted like a champion for the first time, agreeing to put his title on the line against surprise arrival Hulk Hogan. "The Hulkster" pinned Yoko for the belt.

TOM ZENK (1-0)

WM Relevance: He would've probably enjoyed many more successful WrestleManias if he hadn't inexplicably walked out on Rick Martel and the WWF.

Magic Moment: Zenk's dropkicks and armdrags helped lead The Can-Am Connection to a win over Don Muraco and Bob Orton Jr. in the opener of WM3.

Tragic Moment: None.

BORIS ZUKHOV (0-1-BR)

WM Relevance: Boris was no Iron Sheik.

Magic Moment: He and Nikolai Volkoff got to share billing with Steve Allen, Mary Tyler Moore, and gossip columnist Rona Barrett at WM6.

Tragic Moment: The Hart Foundation defeated The Bolsheviks when Bret Hart pinned Zukhov in only 19 seconds.

Mr. Fuji's salt enables Yokzuna to dethrone Bret Hart

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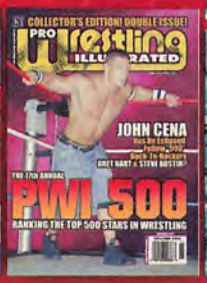

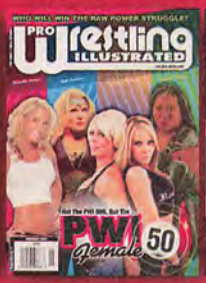

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CLASSIC FEUD

Sheamus VS Morrison

It's About Respect!

TEXT BY **FRANK INGIOSI**

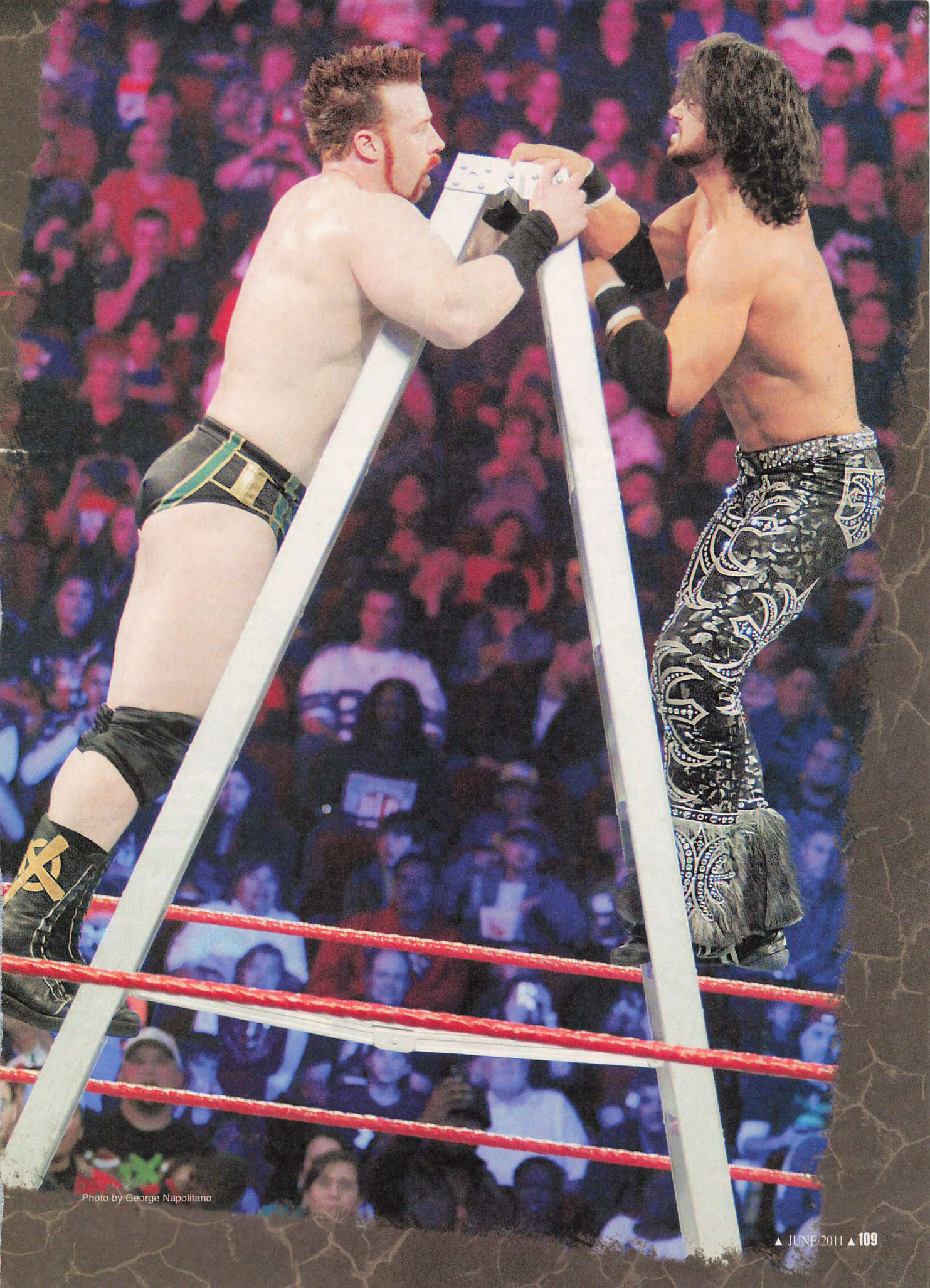
IT WAS LATE-NOVEMBER, 2010, and John Morrison was feeling anything but thankful.

"Anybody but him ..." Morrison muttered over and over as he sat in the lockerroom of Philadelphia's Wells Fargo Center. Morrison, who had wrestled three matches en route to a loss at the hands of Sheamus in the final round of the 2010 King of the Ring tournament, was distraught enough at missing out on the push a KOTR victory brings. Making matters worse was the fact that he lost to his arch-rival Sheamus, who most assuredly would gloat and rub Morrison's face in the missed opportunity at every chance.

Though Morrison is usually able to shrug off trash talk from other wrestlers—he did, after all, feud with The Miz at one time—the mud he anticipated Sheamus would sling already troubled him.

That's because to Morrison, Sheamus isn't just any wrestler. And to Sheamus, Morrison isn't just any wrestler.

For Morrison, Sheamus is the man who threatened to "break his



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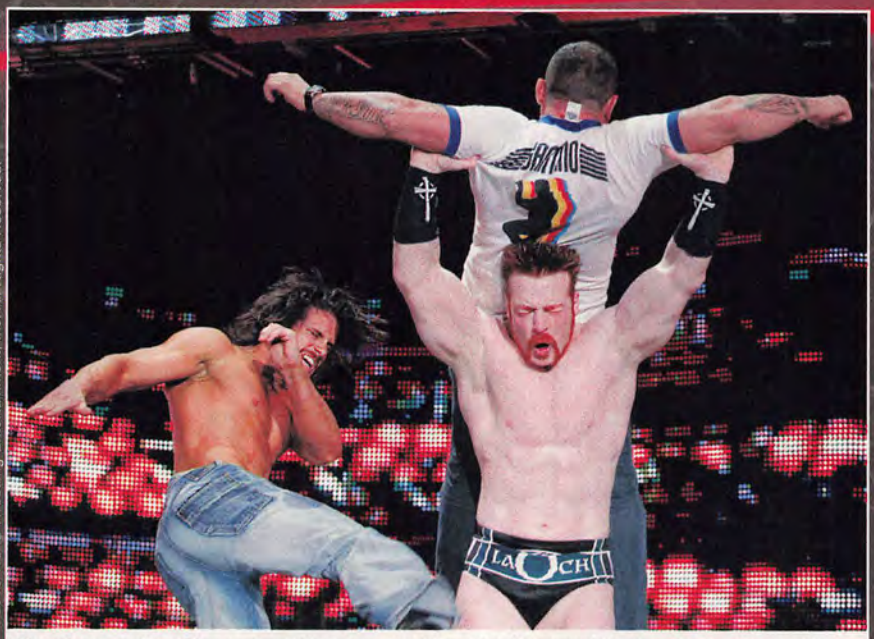

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Unbeknownst to Sheamus at the time, bullying Santino would raise the hackles of John Morrison and kick off a months-long feud that would raise the stock of both wrestlers.

body and his spirit" for having the audacity to call him out for bullying Santino Marella on *Raw*. He also said Morrison was less-than-championship caliber and would never hold a WWE world title.

Sheamus, for his part, suffered a high-profile upset loss to Morrison at Survivor Series and would suffer another the following month at TLC. As the smaller man, Morrison proved that quickness and resilience could overcome Sheamus' power and size..

With no titles on the line between them, and neither man wanting something the other has, this throwback—call it classic—feud comes down to just one thing: respect. There are no sultry valets or briefcases at stake. It is simply two men trying to prove who is better.

But to truly understand the nature of their feud, it helps to understand its origins.

Sheamus and Morrison first crossed paths when Morrison came to the aid of Marella, whose comedic antics riled the Irishman. On successive episodes of *Raw*, Sheamus pounded Marella until Morrison, having seen enough bullying, intervened and challenged him to a match at Survivor Series. Morrison won the match after dodging a bicycle kick and delivering a knee and kick to Sheamus' head.

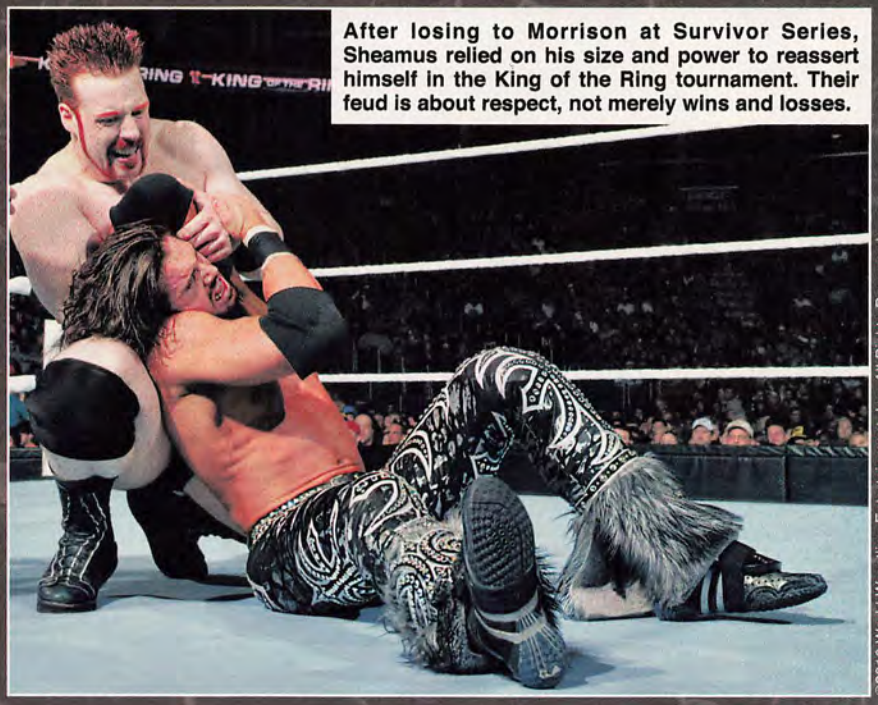
Sheamus and Morrison would meet again on November 29 at WWE's 2010 King of the Ring tournament on *Raw*. Having drawn a bye in the second round due to a double-DQ between Ezekiel Jackson and Drew McIntyre in the first round, Sheamus was well-rested and primed to meet Morrison, who had earlier wrestled Cody Rhodes and Alberto Del Rio to reach the finals.

Despite a valiant effort, Sheamus' brutal smash-mouth approach proved to be too much for a depleted Morrison, and Sheamus went home with the crown.

After still more verbal and physical encounters on *Raw*, Sheamus and Morrison next faced-off in a number-one contender's ladder match at the TLC pay-per-view. Once again, the "Celtic Warrior" struggled with Morrison's agility and fell in defeat, while Morrison went on to challenge WWE champion Miz in a losing effort on *Raw*.

Since their rendezvouz at TLC, the "Shaman Of Sexy" and the "Celtic Warrior" have wrestled several matches on *Raw*, with Sheamus getting the better of the action, although Morrison can hardly be considered the "loser" in this feud.

In the course of fighting for each other's respect, the intensity and quality of their matches has elevated Morrison in the eyes of his peers and WWE fans alike, a dynamic that wasn't lost on Sheamus, who immedi-



After losing to Morrison at Survivor Series, Sheamus relied on his size and power to reassert himself in the King of the Ring tournament. Their feud is about respect, not merely wins and losses.

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Photo by George Napolitano

Though Sheamus had some dominant moments in their TLC rematch (left), it was Morrison who won the match and a shot at The Miz' WWE heavyweight title (below).

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ately took credit for the surge in Morrison's popularity.

"Sure, Morrison has looked great," Sheamus said. "He's had me out there forcing him to wrestle the match of his life—half a dozen times—just to survive. Win or lose, I force him to become a better wrestler every time we meet. He has to keep pace with me, see, because he'll get slaughtered if he doesn't."

Sheamus, too, has looked impressive and has indeed forced Morrison to up the ante, but veteran wrestler and WWE color commentator Jerry Lawler says the credit goes both ways.

"It takes two wrestlers to have a great match," Lawler explained. "When your opponent is showing more fire, or whipping the fans up, you want to match that intensity. Sometimes, you're hurt, or sick, or just not having your best match, but a good opponent can make all the difference."

No question, with his two PPV victories over Sheamus, Morrison has caused some introspection on the part of the "Celtic Warrior," prompting him to ramp up his game as well.

"I'm sure that under the surface, there's a lot of mutual respect," Lawler continued. "Sure, they try to kill each other out there, and they won't admit it, but Morrison and Sheamus know that they've tapped into something special … and they know they need each other to tap into it."

Regardless of who deserves the credit, this feud comes at an opportune time, as WWE seeks to establish a main-event level that includes a mix of proven vets and young up-and-comers such as Sheamus and Morrison. Ironically, by tearing each other limb from limb, Morrison and Sheamus are actually helping to build a solid future for WWE.

But neither Sheamus nor Morrison seems as concerned about the future as much as beating an admission of respect out of the other. And until one of them gives in and proclaims or demonstrates that respect, fans will just have sit through some more thrilling matches. □

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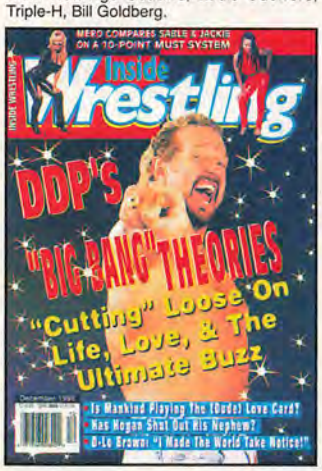
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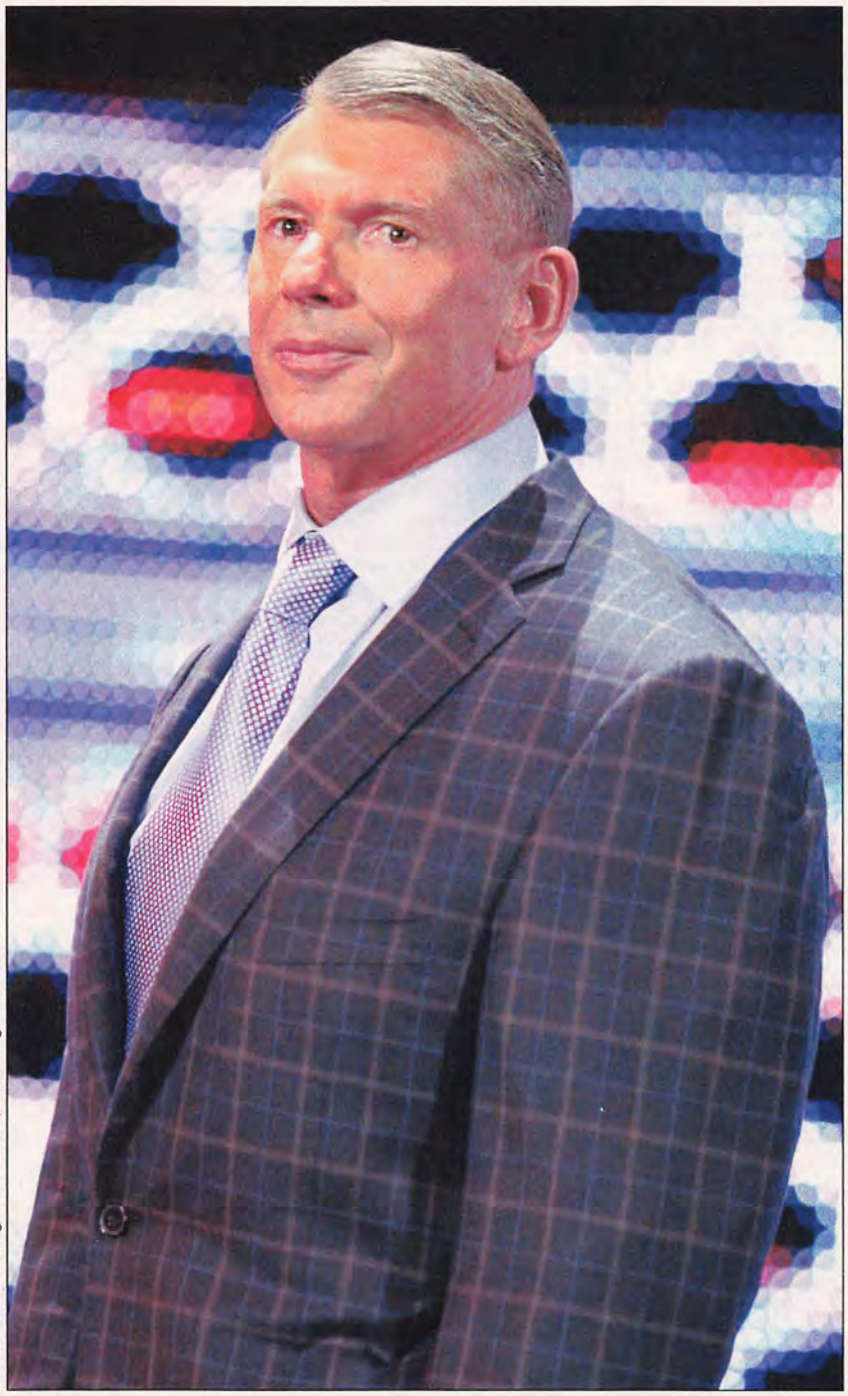
THE BUSINESS PAGE

BY HARRY BURKETT



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No doubt, Vince McMahon had to be happy when government officials recently disrupted 10 websites that had allegedly been illegally streaming WWE pay-per-view and other sports events. Unfortunately for WWE, the TLC PPV was one of December's most heavily pirated shows.

Stealing and streaming on the Web ... Vince McMahon is no fan of the U.S. federal government, but even he had to be happy when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents moved against 10 websites that were allegedly stealing and streaming live television broadcasts—including NFL, NBA, and NHL games—as well as pay-per-views produced by WWE and the UFC.

On the eve of the Super Bowl, authorities began executing warrants based on a federal court order unsealed in Manhattan. According to the Associated Press, the warrants directed Internet domain gatekeepers to disrupt the websites while investigators charge the violators with copyright infringement. The court papers indicated that WWE's TLC was among the most pirated events in the month of December. One of the accused websites, channelsurfing.net, had a posting that said it had been "seized by Homeland Security."

ICE Director John T. Morton said the move was intended "to send a clear message to website operators who mistakenly believe it's worth the risk to take copyrighted programming and portray it as their own." A reason that pirating has become commonplace is that unauthorized viewers can watch such events with virtually the same quality and ease as a lawful subscriber.

Not surprisingly, these sites have cost sports leagues and TV networks millions of dollars over the years—and the feds have implied that legitimate broadcasters haven't done enough to prevent such theft. The theft of digital and intellectual property has been an evolving issue for WWE. A few years ago, WWE took charge of the matter by suing several sports bars and other establishments for advertising free pay-per-views for its patrons without paying the proper fees.

This issue may seem petty to some, but it's one reason why the average WWE live-event ticket price has increased from $35.48 to $39.31 over the past year.

Yoshi Tatsu is smiling ... WWE renewed its television contract with J Sports, the most prominent sports channel in Japan, until 2015. J Sports is quite the WWE powerhouse, already broadcasting *Raw*, *Smackdown*, and *NXT*, and, with this new deal, it will also carry *Superstars*. That's six hours of first-run programming every week.

WWE has been a major presence on J Sports since 1998 and that is the primary reason why it has arguably become more popular than homegrown promotions such as All-Japan, New Japan, and Pro Wrestling NOAH. And just wait until WWE Classics on Demand arrives at some point: Mr. Fuji and Mr. Saito will become gods.

WWE's efforts to dominate the world don't end there. The company has extended its 10-year relationship with Sky Deutschland for three more years, ensuring that its television programming and pay-per-views will continue to be seen in 2.5 million homes throughout Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Sky Deutschland will air full-length versions of *Raw* for the first time, and the new contract broadens its ability to utilize WWE digital and mobile platforms. The agreement also adds *NXT, WWE Experience,* and *Afterburn.* Wait—they still make those shows?

Apparently they do, and the Germans, Austrians, and Swiss are going to see a lot of Josh Mathews in the near future.

TNA stays in the U.K. ... Dixie Carter had to be concerned when Sky TV made plans to shut down its Bravo Network, forcing TNA to find a new cable home in Great Britain. TNA's live-event business in the U.K. and Ireland has been comparable—if not better in some respects—to its efforts in the United States. Fortunately, TNA has been able to switch *Impact*, *Xplosion*, and all TNA pay-per-views to another Sky TV subsidiary, Challenge TV, which is available on Freeview, Sky Channel, and Virgin Media in the British Isles.

According to TNA President Dixie Carter, "We are delighted to have signed this deal giving all our incredible fans in the U.K. exactly what they've been asking for: professional wrestling back on free television."

TNA still enjoys more availability in the U.K. than WWE, primarily because Challenge TV is a basic cable channel whereas WWE programming is broadcast on Sky Sports, the equivalent of a premium channel in the U.S.

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

TNA's jump to Challenge TV after Sky TV announced plans to shut down the Bravo Network (TNA's former U.K. home) should be a win-win. British fans get to see homegrown talent like Douglas Williams without interruption, while *Impact* goes from premium to basic cable and a potentially wider audience.

WWE STOCKWATCH

[For the period of December 1, 2010 to January 31, 2011]

60-Day High: 14.90 on December 10
60-Day Low: 11.75 on January 26
52-Week High: 18.95 on April 26, 2010
52-Week Low: 12.86 on May 6, 2010

Home video sales continue to slip and live attendance has dropped around the world. Yet, according to WWE's fourth-quarter report for the period ending December 31, WWE's net income actually rose by six percent. How did that happen?

This actually continues a trend that began in the third quarter of last year. The general economy is dragging down certain sectors of WWE's business, but television fee revenue, the licensing deal with toymaker Mattel, and further budget cutbacks have helped compensate for those losses.

As reported at the end of the third quarter, WWE Studios—once believed to be a money pit—is now helping the company improve its bottom line. The film division earned $7.9-million in net revenue in the fourth quarter, compared to only $0.2-million during the same three-month period in 2009. But even Wall Street analysts (hey, they watch movies, too) have criticized the vapid scripts behind *Legendary* and *Knucklehead*.

CEO and Chairman Vince McMahon continues to cite "talent-related challenges" as a reason for WWE's still-sluggish performance, although he touts WWE's EBITDA as quite promising. No, EBITDA is not TARU's former partner in All-Japan. It's an acronym for "earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization." WWE's EBITDA for the year 2010—a cool $94-million—was the highest in its history.

TV BREAKDOWN

RAW [USA]

December 13: 3.1
December 30: 3.1
January 3: 3.1
January 10: 3.1
January 17: 3.3
January 24: 3.3
January 31: 3.5

Analysis: Is it the "Road To WrestleMania" effect? Quite possibly. *Raw's* ratings increased by two-tenths of a point when hype for the Royal Rumble began in earnest, and the overall rating jumped another two-tenths of a point—to 3.5—on the night immediately following the Rumble. Will fans like the fact that a new face—albeit a very smiley one—such as Alberto Del Rio is receiving such a mighty push? Anecdotal commentary online suggests that CM Punk taking over as leader of The New Nexus has been an intriguing development. And what does that mean in the final analysis? A little less John Cena, and more of Punk and Randy Orton? And a whole lot more Jerry Lawler? WWE has a great opportunity to re-cultivate its audience now that viewers are giving the product another chance as we approach WrestleMania.

SMACKDOWN [Syfy]

December 10: 1.8
December 17: 1.8
December 21: 2.5
December 31: 1.4
January 6: 2.0
January 13: 1.9
January 20: 2.1
January 27: 2.0

Analysis: *Smackdown* is benefiting from the WrestleMania effect as well, generating overall ratings above 2.0 for the first time in years. Perhaps the constant marketing and synergy between USA Network and Syfy is helping to grab a consistent audience. *Smackdown's* fantastic rating of 2.5 on December 21 must have had some WWE executives dreaming of the possibilities. That was a live edition of *Smackdown* that aired on Tuesday night, instead of Friday night. There's no question that the blue brand would benefit immensely if it were moved to Tuesdays, but that doesn't seem to be in Syfy's plans at the present time. Besides, there may be some in the WWE camp who feel that Fridays have more of an impact on Sunday pay-per-views. Nevertheless, *Smackdown* may be on the verge of thriving.

SUPERSTARS [WGN America]

December 9: 0.5
December 16: 0.6
December 23: 0.6
December 30: 0.7
January 6: 0.6
January 13: 0.6
January 20: 0.5
January 27: 0.5

Analysis: There's no WrestleMania boost here, with *Superstars* firmly mired in the 0.5-0.6 range. It doesn't help that WWE is experimenting with new broadcast teams, with Josh Mathews replacing the Nexus-bound CM Punk alongside Scott Stanford for Raw-brand matches, and Jack Korpela replacing Todd Grisham alongside Matt Striker for Smackdown-brand matches. One problem with *Superstars* is the almost complete lack of star power. Consider the January 27 episode: Tyler Reks faced Trent Barreta in the opener, followed by Zack Ryder and Primo against David Hart Smith and Yoshi Tatsu, and a main event of R-Truth facing Tyson Kidd. R-Truth was the biggest name on the show, but he also has one of the worst win-loss records on the Raw brand. If WWE could spare one—just one—top wrestler per week, *Superstars* might score some real numbers.

IMPACT [Spike]

December 9: 1.1
December 16: 1.1
December 23: 1.1
December 30: 1.1
January 6: 1.2
January 13: 1.3
January 20: 1.2
January 27: 1.3

Analysis: Surely, *Impact* can't be benefiting from the WrestleMania hype, but its ratings are higher nonetheless. *Impact* idled at 1.1 for all of December and then began flirting with 1.3 by the end of January. If this trend continues, *Impact* could be scoring 1.4 on a routine basis. And, remember, it took the dual arrivals of Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair to help TNA's flagship earn that number way back on January 4, 2010. So what dynamics are at work here? Mr. Anderson, Jeff Hardy, Rob Van Dam, AJ Styles, and Beer Money are bona fide veterans that are not yet fossils. The TNA product tends to be less predictable than the more mainstream-oriented WWE. Now we'll just have to see how the latest factional development—Fortune turning on Immortal—affects *Impact's* numbers in the coming weeks.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST TAG TEAM!

THEY SNACKED ON DANGER AND DINED ON DEATH!

"I think the Road Warriors, or LOD, was one of the greatest wrestling tag teams of all time. . . . All I can do is shake my head and smile at the memory of a spiked-up Joe saying, 'Tell 'em, Hawk!' and Mike with that crazy mad look on his face, his tongue hanging out, barking out, 'Oh . . . what a rush!' Both Joe and Mike were first-rate pros who were loved and respected by all who knew them."
—BRET "THE HITMAN" HART

Check out Animal in episode 10 of Medallion Mondays!!

One of the 1st 20 webisodes picked for the 2011 LA Webfest!

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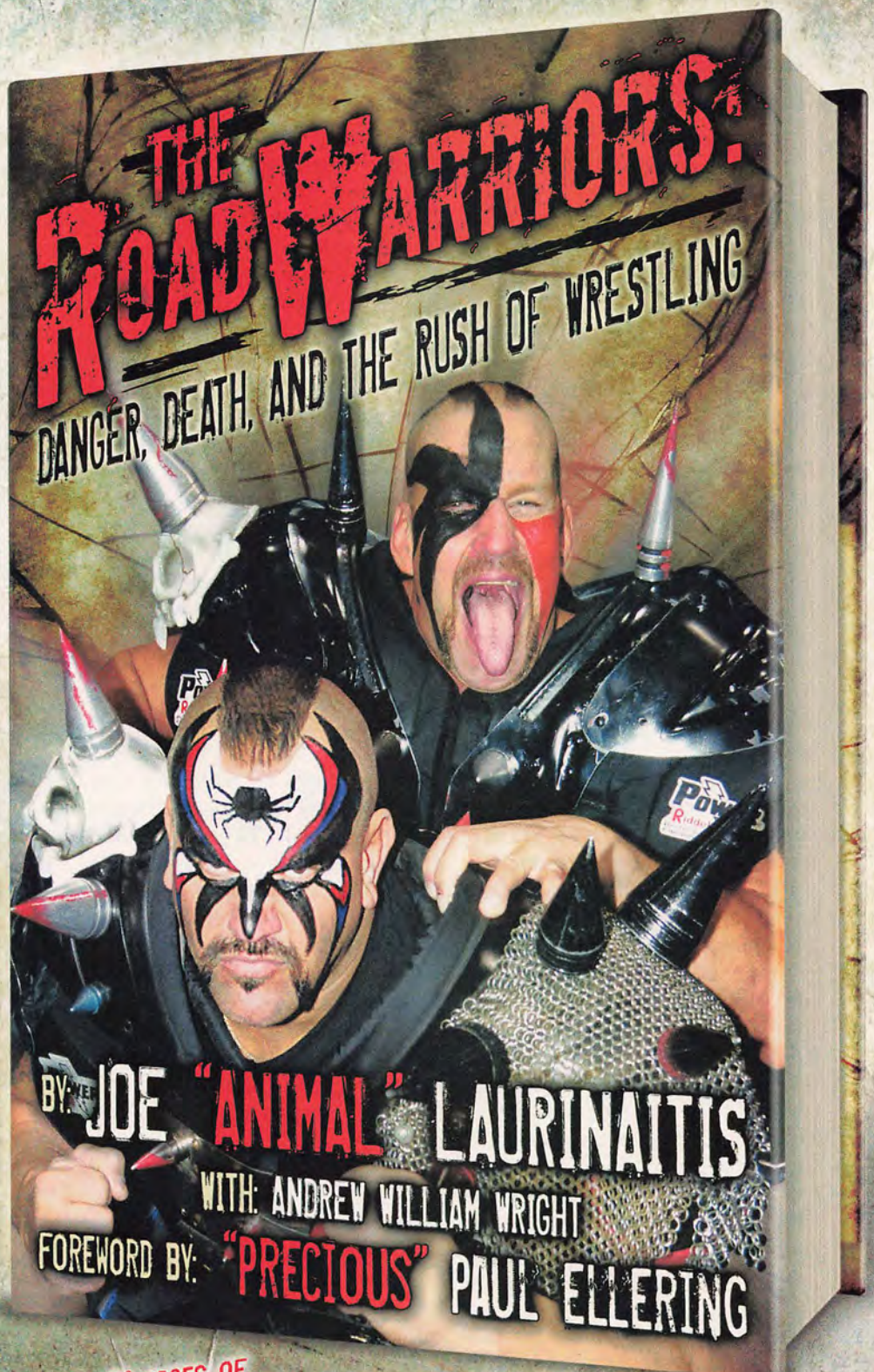
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DANGER, DEATH, AND THE RUSH OF WRESTLING
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FOREWORD BY: "PRECIOUS" PAUL ELLERING

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WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

BY HARRY BURKETT

"THERE ARE ONLY four people in wrestling who I really don't like. Even though Terry Funk was my toughest opponent, I never saw eye-to-eye with him. I'm really beginning to dislike The Miz. I don't like Michael Cole because he cost me the WWE championship …"

Then Jerry Lawler paused before reloading. "There's only one person I truly *despise* and that's Tommy Dreamer. Any time we're in the same room, it's not good."

"The King" was holding court mid-ring before 2,000 fans at the sold-out Mid-Hudson Center in Poughkeepsie, New York. His grudge match against Dreamer inside a steel cage was one of the top attractions of Northeast Wrestling's WrestleFest 15. Lawler and Dreamer have been engaged in a war of words and physicality for the past decade-and-a-half—ever since "The King" disparaged ECW as "Extremely Crappy Wrestling."

Not only is Lawler a legendary figure with 40 years in the business, but he also happens to be the arch-nemesis of WWE champion The Miz. That rivalry started on Lawler's 61st birthday, when he challenged The Miz to a title match. Miz declined, but Raw's anonymous general manager decreed that a TLC match between the two would happen that night. Lawler was on the verge of grabbing the WWE title belt when broadcast partner Michael Cole inexplicably ran into the ring and prevented him from doing so.

The next chapter in the unlikely Lawler-Miz rivalry occurred when "The King" teamed with John Morrison and Randy Orton against Miz, Alex Riley, and Sheamus. Lawler scored the pinfall over Miz. The following week, Lawler beat Miz by countout. On January 31, Lawler eliminated Sheamus to win a seven-man Raw Rumble match to be declared the top contender to Miz' WWE championship at the Elimination Chamber pay-per-view. He's also scored pinfalls over Alex Riley and Ted DiBiase Jr. in televised six-man matches.

I'm shocked that Lawler, who is more than twice Miz' age, has enjoyed such an incredible career resurgence. Those who know Lawler best aren't so surprised.

"Jerry has made appearances at stores, malls, and numerous wrestling events for Northeast Wrestling in the area for over 10 years, and fans still want to get his autograph and have a picture taken with him," said NEW promoter Mike O'Brien, who serves as Lawler's booking agent on the independent circuit. "Jerry is one of the most fan-friendly superstars in the wrestling industry. The same people who have met Jerry before want to meet him again. At our meet and greet before the Poughkeepsie event, he had as long a line as MVP, who was making his first autograph signing ever in the area."

The fact that Lawler had just about the longest line is truly impressive, considering WrestleFest 15 was a star-studded event featuring MVP, Matt Hardy, Sgt. Slaughter, Roxxi, Sabu, and Hurricane Helms, and was rounded out by local stars such as NEW champ Matt Taven, Hale Collins, Pvt. Jeff Starr, Max Bauer, Romeo Roselli, and Brian Anthony *(see "Arena Reports," page 132, for complete results).*

And that seems to be the case whether Lawler acts as a heel or a fan favorite. He claimed to hate Dreamer in a building with a rich ECW history, but at least half the fans—if not more—were cheering for "The King" in what was billed as their final confrontation. The two men brawled inside and outside the cage. They traded chair shots and choked each other. Somehow, a fan's crutch at ringside got into the mix. Dreamer channeled Tajiri and spit beer at Lawler. Then the "Innovator Of Violence" executed

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One reason Jerry Lawler can be a viable threat to The Miz' WWE title even at age 61 is his undying professionalism. Northeast Wrestling promoter Mike O'Brien says few wrestlers are as committed to the fans and the business.

Tommy Dreamer spits beer into the face of Jerry Lawler during their cage match at Northeast Wrestling's WrestleFest 15. This match, won by Lawler, was billed as their final encounter in what has been a 15-year feud.

Lawler's trademark finishing maneuver, the piledriver. Dreamer failed to make the cover and Lawler began crawling around the ring to regain his senses. Suddenly, the 40-year veteran reached down to Memphis, circa 1982, and came up with a fireball to Dreamer's face to score the three-count.

Talk about a hot streak.

Fortunately, Dreamer doesn't hold a grudge against his longtime adversary. "He's great," Dreamer told me, rather matter-of-factly. "Look at his matches. Jerry Lawler is 61 years old and he tore down the house with Miz in that tables, ladders, and chairs match. He can be an amazing heel or an amazing babyface. What Jerry Lawler did for The Miz that night solidified Miz as being a star. Miz was already supposed to be a star because he had the title, but he wasn't. Miz stepped up and became a star when he worked with Jerry Lawler that night."

Dreamer should know. When Dreamer worked to develop talent for WWE, he was the one who convinced The Miz to give up his reality-star dreams and get serious about his wrestling career. For him, watching Miz vs. Lawler was like watching the star pupil take on the grandmaster.

That analogy makes sense to Mike O'Brien. "Jerry can have a great match with anyone," he said. "His ring psychology is touched by no one in the industry today. He always gives 110 percent in all of his matches, pulling out all the stops. We have had him in steel cage matches and hardcore matches, matches against up-and-comers and matches against legends. His matches always get one of the best reactions on the show no matter what other big-name stars are appearing. And he always volunteers to do any radio or newspaper interviews needed to promote the events. Jerry is the consummate professional."

I wonder what the rationale is behind Lawler's big push. Is WWE planning a three-disc DVD set on his career? Are they about to make him join Jim Ross at Classics on Demand?

Maybe I'm being too cynical. Perhaps Vince McMahon has rewarded Lawler's professionalism and loyalty with a fabulous run in the twilight of his career, as he did for Ric Flair. Or maybe—just maybe—Lawler is a phenomenal talent who was the ideal choice to elevate The Miz to megastar status.

That is Dreamer's theory and it's also O'Brien's theory.

They've convinced me. That's my theory, too. □

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

BY DAN MURPHY

THE DOCTOR LOOKED at me with concern. He buried his nose in a stack of files, and then started scratching something on a prescription pad. I sat on the examining table, shifting uncomfortably. Somewhere, an old lady was coughing.

"I'm a bit alarmed about your attitude, Mr. Murphy," the doctor said, peeling off one script and feverishly scratching out a second. "You seem overly negative. Unhappy. Bitter. Angry at the world and everything in it."

I noticed his tie. I didn't like it.

"I'm writing you a prescription," the doctor continued. His tie was yellow with red stripes. "I'm hoping these pills will help you relax, bring your blood pressure down a bit. Help you look at the world with a smile instead of a grimace."

I imagined him with tongue depressors shoved up both nostrils.

He handed me the prescriptions and told me to have a nice day. I told him to bury the tie ... while he was wearing it. And I left to pick up my happy pills.

I should let you know that at any point as I wrote this column, I could have succumbed to one or more of the following side effects: decreased sexual desire, diarrhea, dizziness, dry mouth, nausea, chest pain, confusion, hallucinations, aggressiveness, impulsiveness, irritability, or unusual bruising or bleeding.

That being established, allow me to say this (and this may very well be the happy pills talking): The 2011 Royal Rumble was a masterpiece.

You read that right. I have nothing negative to say about it. From the Dolph Ziggler-Edge opener to the unlikeliest Royal Rumble winner since Vince McMahon, the card was a wonderfully crafted and expertly executed crowd-pleaser; an example of everything that is good about wrestling.

Both of the world title matches went about 20 minutes and delivered excitement and terrific near-falls. Edge and Miz survived to get one step closer to WrestleMania. Ziggler earned plenty of credibility; I have a feeling he's going to wind up with a Money in the Bank briefcase in his hands sometime this year. And Randy Orton moved into a promising feud against CM Punk and The Nexus.

The women's match may not

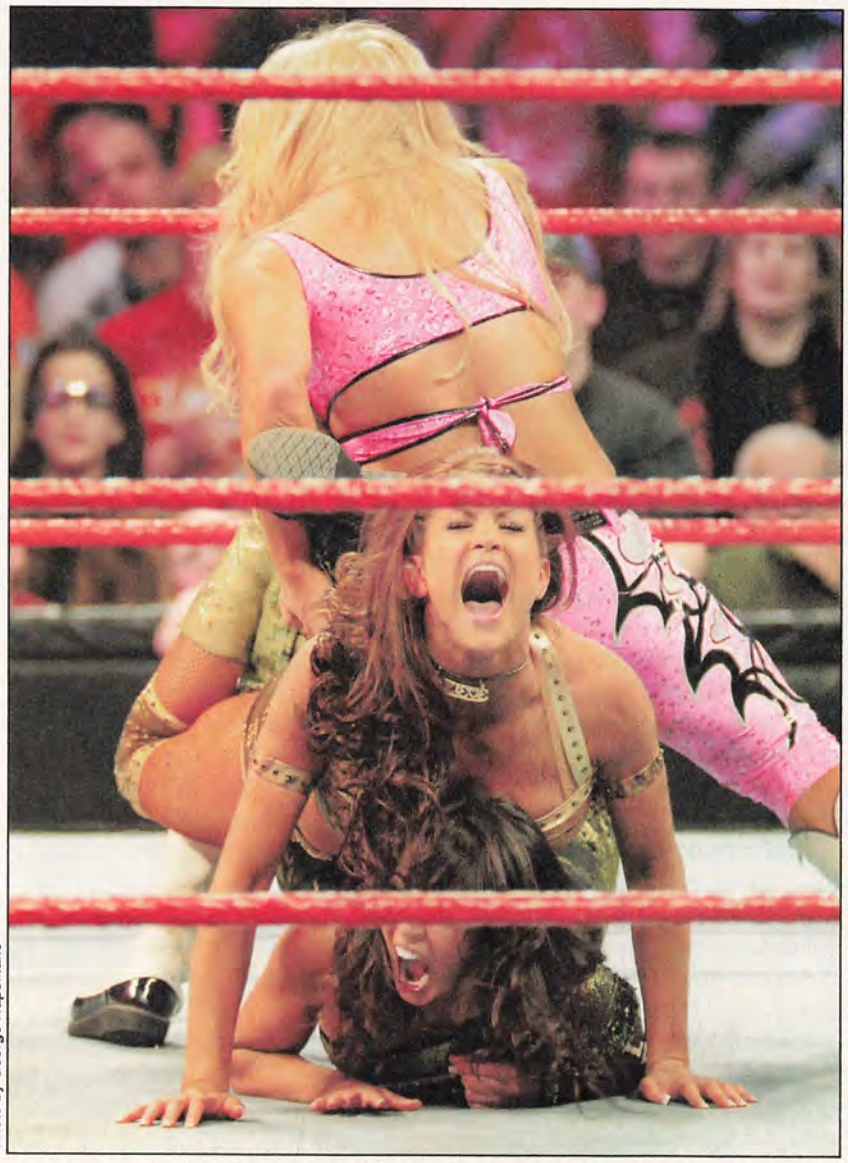


Photo by George Napolitano

Dan Murphy might have been in a dark mood prior to this year's Royal Rumble, but this double-Sharpshooter by Natalya was just one of the card's many highlights that put a smile on his face.

have been a five-star classic, but it was a fun, spirited match that saw Natalya hook a double-Sharpshooter and saw Eve Torres win her second Divas title. It also nicely set the stage for the impending arrival of Awesome Kong, as Kong should steamroll Eve and build to big matches against Beth Phoenix, Gail Kim, and Natalya.

As for the Rumble match, it was artfully laid out. The match opened with two former Ring of Honor champions. A lot of people thought Punk and Daniel Bryan would never make it to WWE. The fact that they were selected to start off one of the biggest pay-per-view attractions of the year shows just how much faith WWE management has in them. Punk and Bryan were clearly savoring their moment in the spotlight, having come a long, long way from the old ROH RexPlex.

After dispatching Zack Ryder and Justin Gabriel, the self-professed wrestling nerds got to go toe to toe with the old master himself, as William Regal hit the ring to trade European uppercuts and neck cravats. Anyone with an appreciation of technical wrestling—and an appreciation of the careers of those three men—had to enjoy the exchange.

Now, I'm no parkour expert (back when I was a kid, jumping on stuff for no reason was just called being a spaz), but John Morrison staved off elimination in style. I'm not sold on him as a wrestler quite yet, but the guy can certainly bounce around pretty well.

The Nexus domination was intriguing, and Punk's mannerisms were perfect. Who but Punk would sit down Indian-style in gleeful arrogance, daring the next wrestler to come out and take a beating?

And, of course, Booker T and Diesel stole the show. Despite the rumors of their appearance that broke a few days before the event, the crowd reaction when they materialized was deafening.

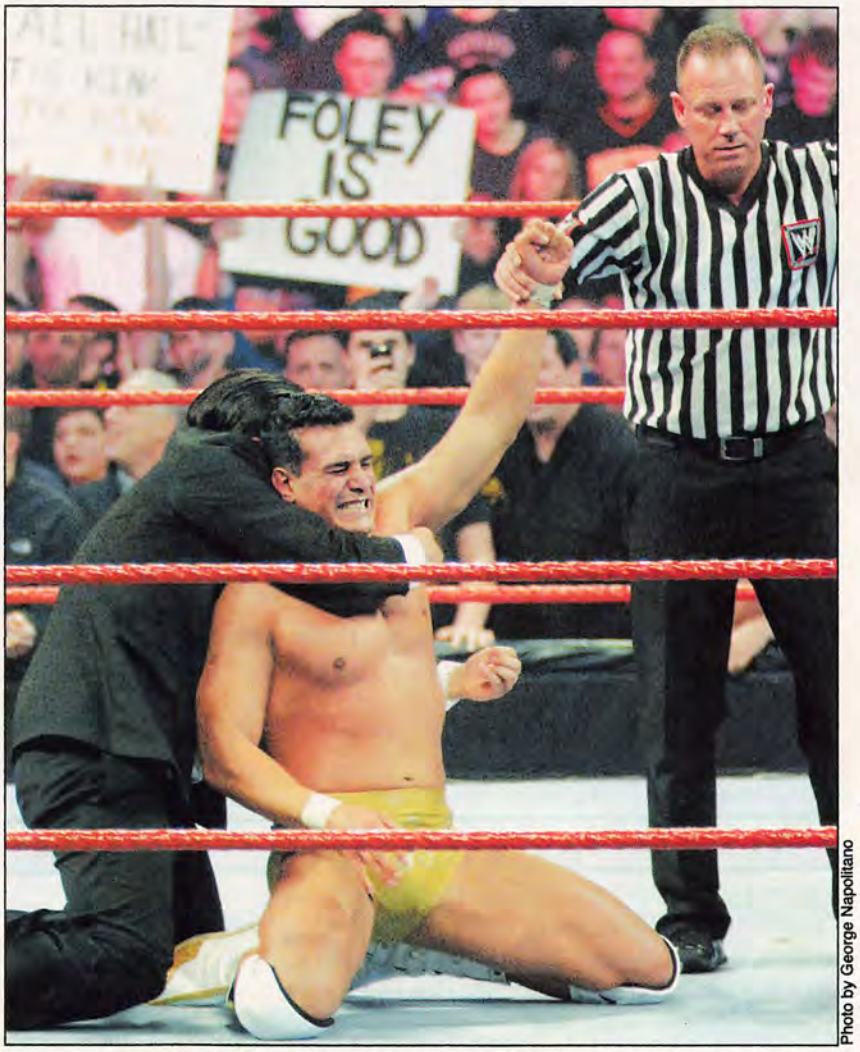


Photo by George Napolitano

Get used to seeing images like this one of Alberto Del Rio, Murphy advises. Following his performance at the Rumble, the Mexican star should be one of WWE's most enduring heels for years to come.

They didn't make much of an impact on the match itself, but I have to think that WWE management took notice of the reaction. "Big Sexy" and "The Book" just might end up being more than merely bit players in 2011.

The brief stare-down between Diesel and The Big Show was provocative. It was 13 years ago that Kevin Nash broke The Giant's neck with a jackknife power bomb in WCW. It was subtle, but it was nice to see WWE acknowledge the history between those two competitors.

Finally, there was Santino Marella. The 37th entrant fell between the ropes to the floor and hid out until only Alberto Del Rio was remaining. For a moment, it truly looked like Santino was going to win. Heck, even Hornswoggle was entertaining. The 2007 *PWI* Rookie of the Year played up some Sweet Shin Music, hit the Boom Drop, and ate a vicious bicycle kick from Sheamus.

As for Del Rio, he's extremely underrated. He was an amateur standout, a star in Mexico (where he competed as Dos Caras Jr.), and an accomplished mixed martial artist. Del Rio has the skills, and winning the Rumble lifted him into true superstar territory. Del Rio has what it takes to be WWE's top villain for the next few years.

Again, it might be the happy pills talking, but all I can say is, if you didn't like this year's Rumble ... consult your physician.

You're at the airport. You see your favorite wrestler relaxing in one of the terminals. You rush up to him or her as questions fill your excited mind. There are certain things you just have to know about this person. Well, these are the **12 questions** you'd never think of asking

12 QUESTIONS

RYAN BISBAL

1

Where's the best place to go for late-night junk food after a match?

That's tough because I don't eat junk food. We usually end up at McDonald's, so I'll go with that.

2

What advice would you give an American wrestler embarking on his first tour of Puerto Rico?

Fans in Puerto Rico love that heart. They love to see blood. They want to see the same intensity they see on TV. It's very real to them. Give 100 percent. It's actually a little easier for American wrestlers to make it in Puerto Rico because oftentimes people have been following them for years before they arrive.

3

Who is the most intimidating wrestler you've faced?

Big Rick Fuller. I saw him on TV when I was little. It was very intimidating to wrestle someone I grew up watching, but he was so professional.

4

Which is better: *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*?

Star Wars, no question.

5

If you could have any super power, what would it be?

Does immortality count? I don't ever want to die.

6

But, if you were to die, what epitaph would you want inscribed on your tombstone?

"If you are here, in front of this tombstone, I hope you remember it all—the bad times and the good—*all* of the times we shared together as friends."

7

What's the cheesiest song on your iPod?

No fair! My girlfriend uses my iPod to listen to country music. We don't have that in Puerto Rico. Probably something by Taylor Swift.

8

What's the strangest finishing move you've ever seen?

Santino Marella's new move. What is it, The Cobra? That's the worst.

9

What is your favorite movie featuring a wrestler?

The Scorpion King with The Rock.

10

What exactly qualifies you as "The Latin Braveheart"?

Wrestling is my passion. I watch wrestling. I eat wrestling. I put my heart into everything I do. I leave everything out there, no matter what, to make sure people come back to the show. I want every fan to feel what I feel when I'm in the ring.

11

What has been your biggest accomplishment to date?

Honestly, coming to the U.S. I never thought I would live here as a boy growing up in Puerto Rico. It has been very good here.

12

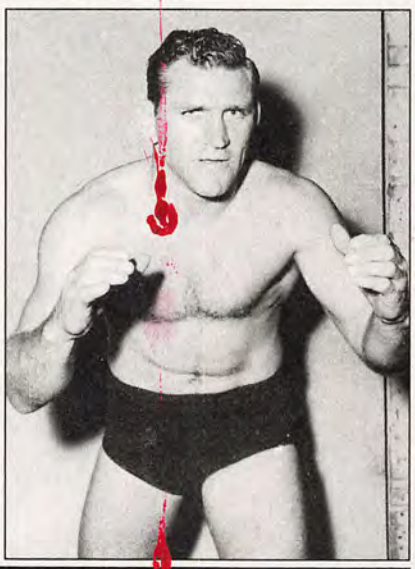
What album is essential for any respectable jukebox to have?

Anything by Led Zeppelin. And, it may sound strange for a Puerto Rican guy to say, but Lynyrd Skynyrd. I can't explain it, but I like that Southern rock.

Photo by Jeffrey Grossman/NECW

THE WRESTLING OBSERVER

HALL OF FAME



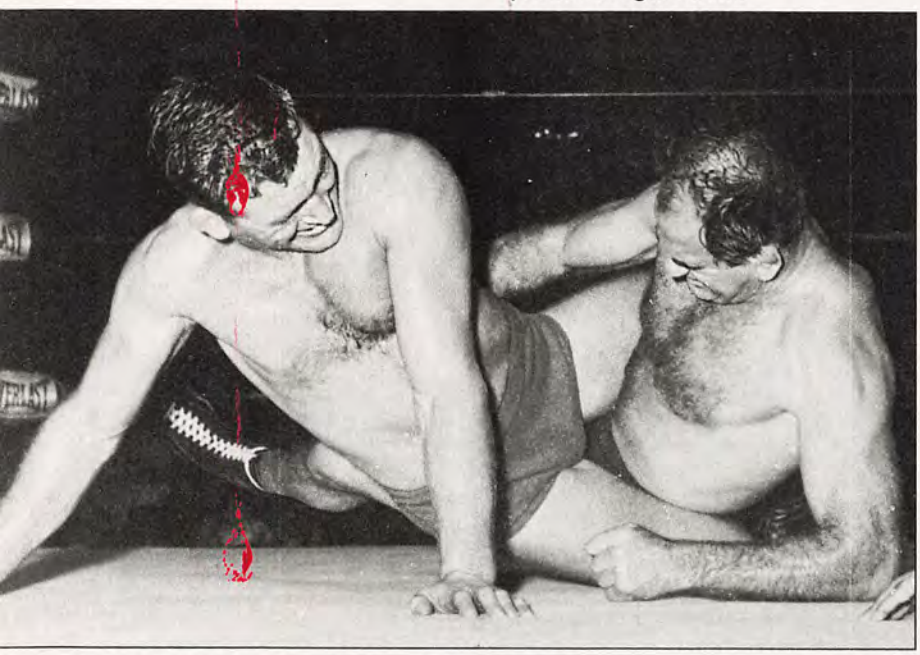
DAN HODGE

In each issue, *PWI* will honor one member of the *Wrestling Observer* Hall of Fame, which we recognize as the sport's official Hall of Fame

THE FAVORITE SON of Perry, Oklahoma, Danny Hodge is an Olympic medalist, a Golden Gloves champion, and is widely considered to be one of the best pound-for-pound professional wrestlers of all-time.

Born May 13, 1932, Hodge was reared in the small town and attended Perry High School, where he won the state wrestling tournament in the 165-pound division.

After joining the Navy in 1951, he continued wrestling under the tutelage of Naval Academy Instructor Ray Swartz and qualified for the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, Finland, where he placed fifth in the 174-pound weight class.



Two technical masters—Hodge and Lou Thesz—wrestle to a draw in this 1960 encounter. Of Hodge, Thesz once said he was "as fierce a competitor as I've ever known."

Hodge went on to the University of Oklahoma and became one of the most successful collegiate wrestlers of all-time, amassing a 46-0 record and winning three NCAA national championships from 1955 through 1957. Not only did Hodge go undefeated, but he never gave up a single takedown throughout his collegiate career, and won more than 75 percent of his matches by pin.

In 1956, he again qualified for the Olympics, but a controversial loss to Bulgaria's Nikola Stanchev in the tournament finals forced Hodge to settle for the silver medal. Hodge had been leading Stanchev by a score of 8-2 when the referee ruled that he was pinned because his shoulders briefly touched the mat as he rolled through a move.

Despite the loss, Hodge's prowess was celebrated on the cover of the April 1, 1957, issue of *Sports Illustrated* with a title that read simply: "Oklahoma's Dan Hodge, Best U.S. Wrestler."

After establishing himself as the nation's top amateur wrestler, Hodge decided to try his hand at boxing. He amassed a 17-0 amateur record (including 12 knockouts) and won the 1958 Golden Gloves tournament as a heavyweight at Madison Square Garden. Hodge decided to turn pro as a boxer and went 8-2 before announcing his retirement from the Sweet Science.

With his fame and marquee

Hodge removes his NWA junior heavyweight title belt before a 1962 defense. Though records are inexact, Hodge is credited with at least five junior heavyweight championship reigns during his career.

To demonstrate his tremendous strength to fans, Hodge would single-handedly crush apples. Considering his modest physique, foes must have been quite surprised by Hodge's strength when they locked up.

value, Hodge chose to wrestle professionally, training under Leroy McGuirk and Ed "Strangler" Lewis. He made his pro wrestling debut in 1959 and quickly became the top contender to the NWA junior heavyweight championship (which was reserved for wrestlers weighing 220 pounds or less). On July 22, 1960, Hodge defeated Angelo Savoldi to win the title before an estimated 6,000 fans at the Stockyards Coliseum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Hodge would hold that championship for much of the next 16 years. Depending on the source, he held the title five to eight times during that span. With his amateur accomplishments and incredible physical strength, Hodge became one of the most respected and feared wrestlers to set foot in a ring. Though his physique wasn't rippling with muscles, Hodge was said to have extraordinary tendon strength. Once he had opponents in his grip, escape was futile. One of Hodge's signature feats of strength was to crush an apple in one hand, a feat he does to this day at age 78.

Hodge was also a successful tag team competitor, winning the NWA International (Japan) tag team title with Wilbur Snyder and the NWA U.S. tag title five times, with Skandor Akbar (twice), Lorenzo Parente, Luke Brown, and Jay Clayton.

Hodge's wrestling career came to an end in 1976 when he suffered a broken neck in a car accident.

As a professional wrestler, Hodge helped bring credibility and star power to the sport. He also helped popularize junior heavyweight bouts that featured quick-paced takedowns, superior mat wrestling, and submissions. He is also a pioneer in what today would be considered "mixed martial arts" style multi-discipline competition.

"He was as fierce a competitor as I've ever known," said Lou Thesz in 1997, when the editors of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED presented Hodge with the Editors' Award (now the Stanley Weston Award). "There is no question Hodge is one of the strongest wrestlers of all-time, and one of the best ever."

In 2005, Oklahoma lawmakers honored Hodge as an "Oklahoma Sports Hero." In 2007, he received the Lou Thesz Award from the Cauliflower Alley Club, which is awarded to a wrestler who has achieved greatness in both amateur and professional competition.

Today Hodge remains a visible and active ambassador for collegiate wrestling. His standing in the sport is so high that the award presented to the top collegiate wrestler in the nation was named in his honor—The Dan Hodge Trophy. Hodge is a charter member of *The Wrestling Observer* Hall of Fame. □

For his achievements and body of work, PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED honored Hodge with the Editors' Award (now known as the Stanley Weston Award) in 1997.

INDEPENDENT ROUNDUP

By AL ALVEN

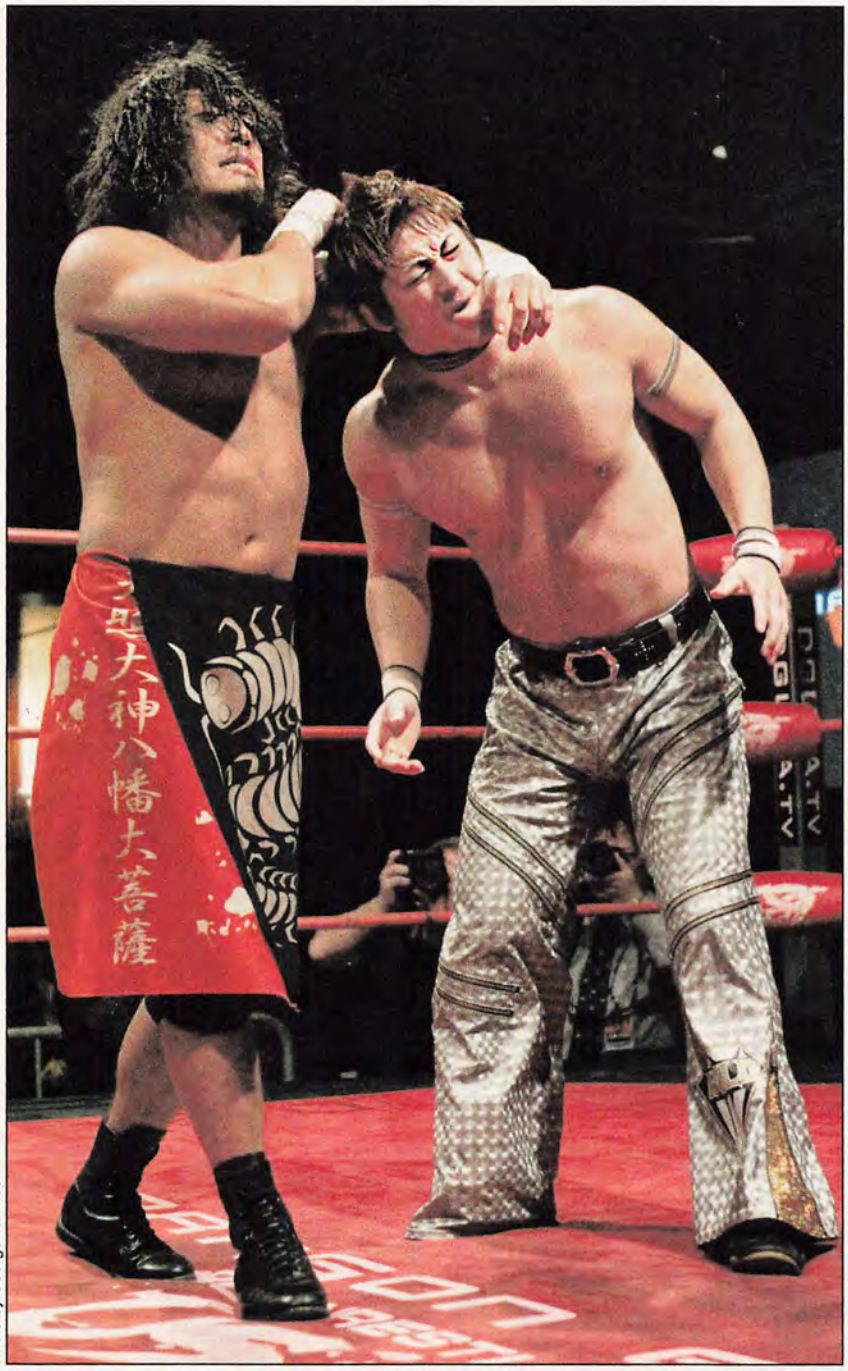


Photo by George Tahinos

In a recent upset, YAMATO defeated Dragon Gate USA Open the Freedom Gate champion BxB Hulk in New York City. While Hulk was a definite fan favorite as champ, many consider YAMATO to be just as dynamic and popular.

THE LANDSCAPE OF Dragon Gate USA was dramatically altered over the course of a three-day span in late-January, thanks in large part to an unexpected title change.

Heading into the promotion's first triple-shot weekend, all eyes were on the tag team division and the four-team tournament to crown the inaugural Open the United Gate champions.

During the first show of the weekend, however, **YAMATO** pulled off a stunning upset, taking the Open the Freedom Gate title from **BxB Hulk** in New York City. In doing so, YAMATO became just the second holder of DGUSA's top title, ending Hulk's impressive 426-day reign.

Like Hulk, YAMATO has been one of the company's most reliable and popular performers since its inception in mid-2009. Now the spotlight shines directly on the dynamic five-year pro, who insists he is only beginning to build his legacy.

Two nights later, in Union City, New Jersey, **Masato Yoshino** and **PAC** defeated **Chuck Taylor** and **Johnny Gargano** in a spectacular tournament final to claim the Open the United Gate title.

In the semifinals the previous night in Philadelphia, Yoshino and PAC defeated **CIMA** and **Dragon Kid** while **Taylor** and **Gargano** beat **Naruki Doi** and **Rikochet** to earn their shot at the gold.

"Yoshino and I promise to be fighting champions," said PAC afterward. "We look at the example BxB Hulk set, holding the singles title for well over a year and back-

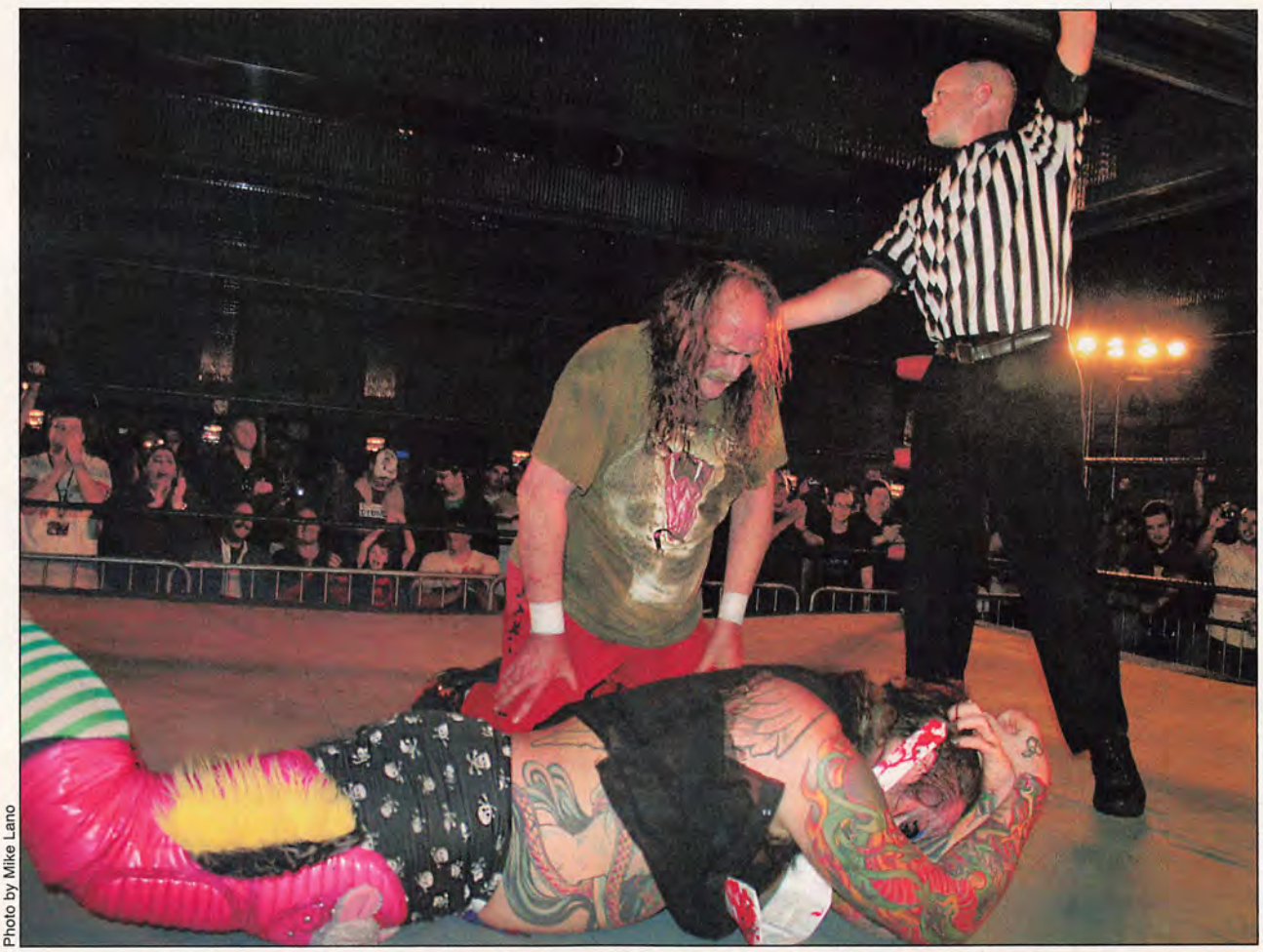


Photo by Mike Lano

Though he lost to mentor Jake Roberts in "The Snake's" retirement match at WrestleReunion V, Sinn Bodhi remains determined to make life difficult for CHIKARA Pro's UltraMantis Black.

ing down from no one. That's something for every member of this roster to look up to and aspire to achieve!"

Over the same weekend, both Ring of Honor and Pro Wrestling Guerrilla presented top-notch shows as part of WrestleReunion V festivities in Los Angeles.

The major story coming out of the ROH event was a win by **Shelton Benjamin** and **Charlie Haas** over the company's tag team champions, **Chris Hero** and **Claudio Castagnoli**, in a non-title match.

With the victory, Benjamin and Haas avenged their loss to Hero and Castagnoli at Glory By Honor IX, and all but guaranteed themselves a future title shot.

In other action: ROH champion **Roderick Strong** turned back the challenge of **El Generico**, TV champ **Christopher Daniels** retained against **Mark Briscoe**, and **Davey Richards** beat **T.J. Perkins** in what many called the best match of the show.

Not to be outdone on its home turf, PWG pulled out all the stops for its own WrestleReunion V event, dubbed Kurt Russell-Reunion II.

Castagnoli and Hero earned some measure of redemption for the previous night's loss to Benjamin and Haas, with Castagnoli successfully defending his PWG title against El Generico, and Hero defeating **Kevin Steen**.

Low-Ki (f.k.a. **Kaval**), making his return to the indy scene, scored a big win over Richards, and in tag action, The **RockNES Monsters** (**Johnny Goodtime** & **Johnny Yuma**) defeated **The Young Bucks** (TNA's **Generation Me**), **The Cutler Brothers**, and **The Fightin' Taylor Boys** in a four-way to become the first team to qualify for the 2011 DDT4 Tournament.

Perhaps the most significant results from the show came from the involvement of several all-time greats who were part of the undercard. In a Legends Battle Royal, **Roddy Piper** emerged victorious, last eliminating **Terry Funk**.

The match was presented Royal Rumble-style, with participants entering at timed intervals, and featured a who's who of former greats, including **Tito Santana**, **"Cowboy" Bob Orton**, **The Warlord**, **The Barbarian**, **Shane Douglas**, **Chavo Guerrero Sr.**, **Shane Helms**, **Savio Vega**, and **Jimmy Hart**.

Not only that, but the show also included the much-hyped retirement match of **Jake "The Snake" Roberts**, who defeated his protégé **Sinn Bodhi** with his trademark DDT. Afterward, Rob-

Photo by Steve Bragg

Hoosier Pro Wrestling's heavyweight champ Ox Harley (foreground) and promoter Jerry Wilson are left helpless after a fork-wielding rampage from top contender JD Marionni. Marionni was suspended from HPW for 30 days following the outburst.

erts laid his snake over Bodhi as the fans gave him a standing ovation and chanted, "Hall of Fame! Hall of Fame!"

Despite coming up short against his mentor, Bodhi is causing a bizarre stir in CHIKARA Pro.

In a complicated chain of events, Bodhi lured former **Ultra-Mantis Black** allies **Obariyon** and **Kodama** away from their leader after Black was unable to produce the Eye of Tyr, a mysterious Scandinavian artifact that is said to control the minds of others.

Bodhi claims he had been promised the prize after helping train Obariyon and Kodama to assist Black in his war against **Bruderschaft des Kreuzes** last year. A subsequent attack by Bodhi and his minions saw Black get choked out with a steel rod before eventually being saved by **Hallowicked** and **Frightmare**.

Back to the subject of legends, **Jerry "The King" Lawler** has played a vital role in the WWE title picture over the past several months, but that has not stopped him from competing regularly in the indies.

Lawler defeated longtime rival **Bill Dundee** in the main event of Showtime All-Star Wrestling's Tribute to the Fairgrounds event at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville with—what else?—his patented piledriver.

The highlight of the night, however, came earlier when **Hammerjack** defeated **Lonestar** in a no-disqualification match for the SAW Southern heavyweight title. At one point, Hammerjack bodyslammed his 300-plus-pound rival from the top rope through a table on the outside.

Somehow, Lonestar recovered and ascended the top rope, this time looking for a splash. Hammerjack was again quick to react, popping up to hit Lonestar with an armdrag/snapmare variation that led to the pin.

The Sheik's year-plus reign as NWA Midwest heavyweight champion recently came to an end at the hands of one of the few men in wrestling who might be just as sadistic as he is!

Sadist captured the title in a steel cage match in West Allis, Wisconsin, which NWA officials had hoped would settle their feud. A tactical blunder by the champ led to his dethroning. As Sheik sidestepped a spear attempt by Sadist, the challenger slammed through the cage door and to the floor, giving him the win and the title.

Immediately after, an enraged Sheik declared his personal "jihad" against the NWA for its refusal to grant him an NWA heavyweight title match over the past year. He claimed that despite holding the NWA North American title since early-2010 and defeating multiple top contenders, he has been deliberately overlooked by NWA Executive Director **Bob Trobich**.

In Hoosier Pro Wrestling, **JD Marionni** has been flashing a sadistic streak of his own lately. In an early-February title match against HPW heavyweight champion **Ox Harley**, Marionni carved up the champ with a fork. The referee ended the match due to excessive blood loss from Harley, but when promoter **Jerry Wilson** attempted to stop the carnage,

the 400-pound Marionni delivered two splashes to Wilson. By the time order was restored, Wilson and Harley were left lying in the ring. HPW immediately suspended Marionni for 30 days.

WXWC4 female competitor **Niya** might have thought she was a shoo-in for the group's Empress tournament to determine a women's champion in April, but commissioner **Maven Bentley** had a few surprises for the New Mexico native when she recently returned to Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Niya had attacked women's champion **Miss Karissa** so savagely following a late-2010 loss that the champ had to vacate the title due to her injuries. Niya had also stolen the title belt from Karissa.

Since it was she who put the champ out, and she who had physical possession of the belt, Niya assumed she had an automatic berth in the tourney. But her arrogance turned to fury on February 5, when Bentley announced that he had a new women's title belt made in the weeks between WXWC4 cards, and that Niya would have to qualify for the tournament by defeating tough indy vet Brittany Force.

In a tightly contested bout that featured several momentum changes and near-falls, Niya outdueled Force and won entry into the tournament. But even in victory, Niya remains indignant.

"I had to qualify?" she asked rhetorically. "Excuse me, but I've been here for two years. That qualifies me. Listen, I'm wrestling in that tournament whether I'm invited or not!"

Up in New England, Chaotic Wrestling's tag team title remains vacant after a match between the **Logan Brothers** (**Matt** & **Bryan**) and **Chase Del Monte** & **Julian Starr** was ruled a no-contest thanks to an attack on both teams by **République** (**Kongo** & **Fala**).

With the belts still held up, CW officials are currently working on a solution. A triple-threat match to fill the vacancy seems likely, but does République deserve a shot at the gold by virtue of interrupting a match between the top contenders?

In other CW news, **"American Sasuke" Mikaze** has avenged a prior loss to **"The Enforcer" Max Bauer** and regained the New England championship. Bauer had taken the title from Mikaze by dubious means after winning a battle royal and being named number-one contender in early-January.

RECENT TITLE CHANGES

NWA Anarchy, Cornelia, GA, January 8: Tank beat **Mikael Judas** for the NWA Anarchy heavyweight title ... **Shaun Tempers** pinned **Brodie Ray Chase** in a tag team match (partners were **Bo Newsom** and **Slim J**, respectively) to win the NWA Anarchy TV title ... **IWA Wrestling, Chillicothe, OH, January 13: Tom McClaine** defeated **Sid Angel** and **American Kickboxer** to become the IWA cruiserweight champion ... **Brew City Wrestling, West Allis, WI, January 14: The Beer City Bruisers** beat **Team Eh!** & **The Urban Assault Team** in a steel cage match to win the NWA Midwest tag team title ... **NWA Southwest/WoW, Cypress, TX, January 14: "Showtime" Scot Summers** pinned **"Solid Gold" Greg Symonds** for the WoW Texas heavyweight title ... **NWA Fusion, Mattaponi, VA, January 15: A-1** (**Jeff Early** & **Zak Hilton**) beat the **Georgia Bulldogs** (**Marky Denny** & **Sean Denny**) for the tag team title ... **SoCal Pro Wrestling, Oceanside, CA, January 15: Tommy Wilson** defeated **Hector Canales** to become the new SCP heavyweight champion ... **Renegade Pro Wrestling, Metropolis, IL, January 21: Bric Bradley** defeated **Cole James** in a 60-minute Iron Man match (2-1) to win the RPW heavyweight title ... **Championship Wrestling Overload, Milledgeville, GA, January 29: Irish Carbomb** (**Neil McGuiness** & **Ash**) beat **Power Trip** (**Kyle Hendrix** & **Big Daddy Osborne**) for the CWO tag team title ... **Tri-State Wrestling Alliance, Voorhees, NJ, January 30: Damian Dragon** & **Matt Saigon** defeated **The Best Around** (**T.J. Cannon** & **Bruce Maxwell**) to win the TWA tag team title. □

Photo by Frank Krewda

WXWC4 bad girl Niya wasn't flashing any peace signs or smiles after learning recently that she had to qualify for a spot in the promotion's upcoming Empress women's championship tournament.

THE INTERNATIONAL REPORT

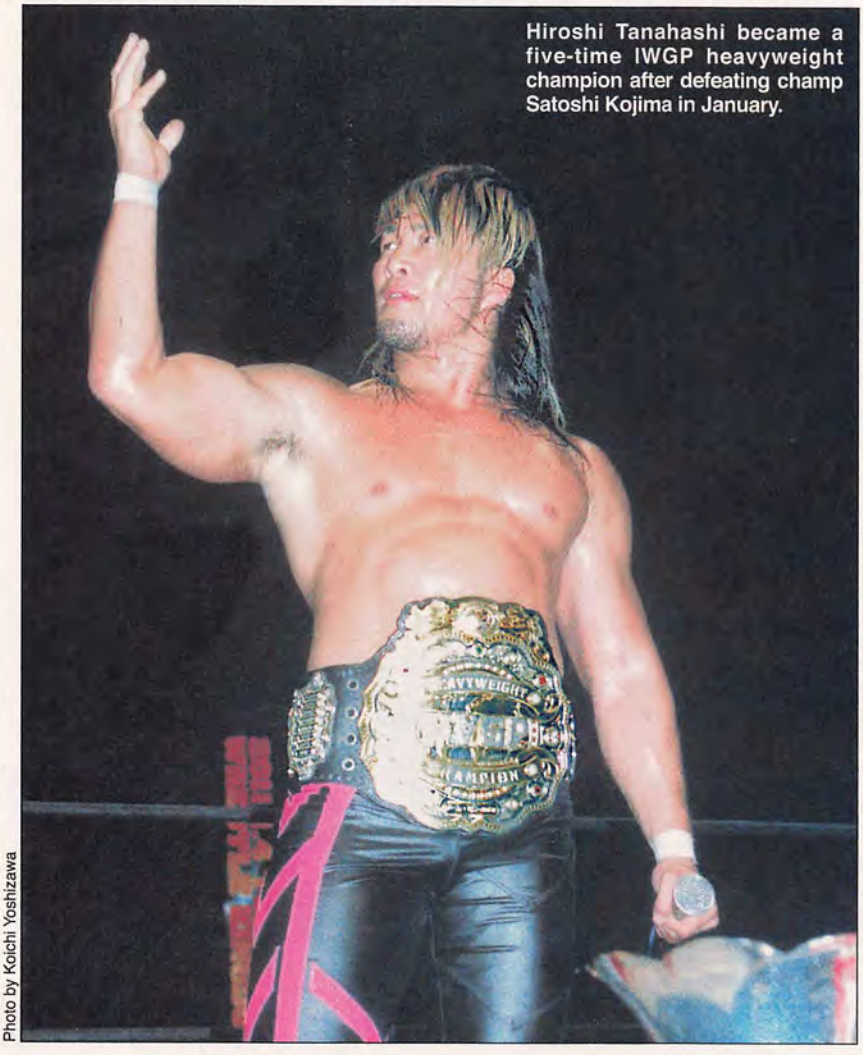
BY BILL MELTZER

VETERAN NEW JAPAN star **Hiroshi Tanahashi** became a five-time IWGP heavyweight champion when he ended rival **Satoshi Kojima's** 85-day title reign at Wrestle Kingdom 5 at the Tokyo Dome. Tanahashi's most recent title reign (summer 2009) was cut short when he fractured an orbital bone and was unable to defend the title.

The Wrestle Kingdom card as a whole was a box office success, drawing a crowd of nearly 42,000, the largest at the Dome in six years.

In addition to the New Japan contingent, the 13-match card featured representatives from Pro Wrestling Noah, Pro Wrestling Zero-1, and Dramatic Dream Team (DDT). There were four title matches, including TNA World champion **Jeff Hardy** successfully defending his belt against **Tetsuya Naito**.

After much speculation and rumor, lucha libre superstar **Mistico** has decided to leave EMLL in order to sign with the WWE. The spectacular aerialist was ranked number three in the 2007 "*PWI* 500" and number five the year before. As with **Dos Caras Jr.** (WWE's **Alberto Del Rio**), Mistico is likely to spend a stint in Florida Championship Wrestling to perfect the WWE style before moving to the big roster. There is no word yet on whether Mistico will keep his mask and ring persona (in similar fashion to **Rey Mysterio Jr.**) or undergo a complete character change like Del Rio. Prior to his departure, Mistico will reportedly embark on a farewell tour.



Hiroshi Tanahashi became a five-time IWGP heavyweight champion after defeating champ Satoshi Kojima in January.

Photo by Koichi Yoshizawa

Carly Colon (formerly **Carlito** in WWE) has rebounded quickly from losing the WWC Universal heavyweight championship in controversial fashion. **Ricky Banderas** captured the storied Council belt from Colon as the direct result of outside interference by **Shane Sewell**. Shortly after dropping the title, Carlito announced plans to embark on short tours of Japan and Mexico before returning to WWC. In his first match on his Japanese jaunt, veteran pro wrestler and MMA competitor Kendo Kashin narrowly defeated Colon. In Mexico, he signed on as a competitor in AAA's Rey de Rios tournament.

Former WWE star **Montel "MVP" Porter** has announced that he is now clear to work dates with New Japan both in Japan and North America. NJPW will bring members of its roster to North America in the spring for a series of three East Coast shows in conjunction with Jersey All Pro Wrestling. Porter, who has finally worked through visa problems stemming from his previous criminal record, has gotten clearance to work in Japan. He plans to stay for at least a year.

In Pro Wrestling NOAH, some bad blood is brewing between **KENTA** and **Go Shiozaki**. During a recent six-man tag team match that pitted Shiozaki, KENTA, and **Yoshinari Ogawa** against **Mohammed Yone**, **Yoshinobu Kanemura**, & **Genba Hirayanagi**, KENTA delivered a resounding chair shot to Shiozaki, for no apparent reason. Shiozaki will no doubt seek his revenge on a future card.

Meanwhile IWGP tag team champion **Giant Bernard** is going out of his way to assure fans—and more importantly—tag team partner **Karl Anderson** that he remains committed to the tandem despite going to Pro Wrestling NOAH, to target GHC champion **Takashi Sugiura**. "I'm as committed as ever to defending these belts," Bernard said. "No matter where I show up to wrestle."

The international wrestling community is mourning the recent deaths of longtime British promoter and wrestler **Paul Lincoln** and 1970s and early-1980s lucha libre performer **El Vagabundo**. Our sincere condolences go out to their families and friends.

Lincoln, who passed away at age 78, was one of the promoters most responsible for the rise of British wrestling in the 1960s and early-1970s as well as a highly successful rock 'n' roll concert promoter and restaurateur. A native of Australia, Lincoln made his pro wrestling debut in Sydney in the late-1940s. Working for promoter **Jimmy Sharman**, he wrestled extensively throughout his native land and New Zealand and later embarked on a wrestling tour of Japan. In 1951, Lincoln emigrated to Great Britain and resumed his wrestling career the next year after reconnecting with old school friend and pro wrestler **Ray Hunter**.

In 1958, Lincoln formed Paul Lincoln Management and began to extensively promote cards around England and Wales. Later, he branched out to promote wrestling tours in non-traditional pro wrestling countries, including Malta, several African nations, Thailand, and Hong Kong. His greatest promotional success was forging a partnership with Granada Theatres to present mat cards in their large chain of British venues. As a result, Lincoln became the prime competitor in the U.K. to the well-established Dale Martin Promotions. Lincoln recruited both established and rising British stars, wrestlers from Europe and Japan, and American imports such as **Ricki Starr** and **Sky Hi Lee**.

Still itching to step back in the ring, Paul donned a black leather mask in the early-1960s and became the first British wrestling incarnation of **Dr. Death**. He began a long-running feud with **The White Angel**, who was portrayed by Lincoln's real-life close friend and longtime business partner, **Lord Alfred Hayes**. During the period, Dr. Death formed a heel alliance with the original **Kendo Nagasaki** and American import **The Outlaw**. Lincoln retired as both a wrestler and promoter in 1975.

Born **Jose Luis Garcia** in 1949, El Vagabundo made his debut at age 21 for Lucha Libre Internacional after being trained by famed masked wrestler **El Matematico**. In his early years, he wrestled without a mask under the ring name **Chamaco Garcia**. Several years later, he came up with the idea for his transient character, complete with a patched-together mask. Able to work comedic matches or more serious bouts with equal aplomb, the 5'7", 170-pound "El Vago" became one of Mexico's top welterweights. He had long-lasting feuds with UWA lightweight titleholder **El Signo** and welterweight titlist **Lobo Rubio**.

Garcia chose to remain affiliated with LLI throughout his career rather than switching allegiance to the more successful CMLL. Periodically venturing over the border to Texas and California cards geared toward Mexican fans, El Vago appeared extensively throughout his native country. He also wrestled a few matches in Central America. Despite his flimsy-looking hood, El Vago was never unmasked throughout his career. He retired in 1992. Several years later, with Garcia's blessing, the El Vagabundo character (with a slightly altered masked design) was briefly resurrected by **Julian Carillo**, who soon moved on to several other identities. □

Photo by Koichi Yoshizawa

Former lucha libre star Mistico has signed with WWE; however, it is unknown whether or not he will keep his name and his mask.

ARENA REPORTS

We encourage promoters and readers to e-mail results to:

PWIResults@yahoo.com

Please try to utilize the exact format you see in the "Arena Reports." Also, please distinguish between handicap matches and three- or four-way matches. And, when reporting the result of a handicap match, indicate the number of competitors and who was the last man eliminated. Finally, please note pinfall finishes. Following these guidelines will help us greatly and make it more likely that your report will be used.

SPOTLIGHT CARD OF THE MONTH

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON—WWE Royal Rumble at TD Garden: World champion **Edge** defeated **Dolph Ziggler** ... Heavyweight champion **The Miz** pinned **Randy Orton** ... **Eve Torres** defeated **Layla**, **Michelle McCool**, & Divas champion **Natalya** for the title in a four-way match ... **Alberto Del Rio** won the 40-man Royal Rumble, last eliminating **Santino Marella**.
(01-30-11)

—Spotlight Photos by George Napolitano

UNITED STATES

ARKANSAS

LITTLE ROCK—WWE Raw at the Verizon Arena: WWE tag team champions **Vladimir Kozlov** & **Santino Marella** defeated **The Usos** ... **John Morrison** pinned **Daniel Bryan**... **Randy Orton** pinned **Dolph Ziggler** ... **Natalya** defeated **Maryse** ... **Mark Henry** beat **Ted DiBiase Jr.** in an over-the-top rope challenge ... **CM Punk** beat **John Cena**.
(01-17-11)

—Dave Flagler

CALIFORNIA

SIMI VALLEY—Millennium Pro Wrestling at the Yankee Doodles Nightclub: **Jarek Matthews** pinned **Nick Madrid** ... **Mario Banks** defeated **Bo Cooper** by DQ ... **Nikki** pinned **Thunderkitty** ... **Anchors Away** defeated **The Ballard Cousins** in the finals of the tag team title tournament ... **Lethal Logan X** defeated Maximum champion **Hellkid** by submission for the title ... **Brandon Parker** pinned **Espiritu Infernal** ... **Vizzion** pinned **Omar Duncan** in a mullet-vs.-afro match ... **Ryan Taylor** defeated **Davey Richards** by submission.
(01-30-11)

—Chad Simplicio

LOS ANGELES—Ring of Honor at the L.A. Airport Hilton: **Harlem** & **Lance Bravado** defeated **Caleb Konley** & **Cedric Alexander** ... **Jay Briscoe** pinned **Colt Cabana** ... **The All Night Express** (**Kenny King** & **Rhett Titus**) defeated **Dustin** & **Brandon Cutler** ... **Davey Richards** defeated **T.J. Perkins** by submission ... TV champion **Christopher Daniels** pinned **Mark Briscoe** ... **World's Greatest Tag Team** (**Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas**) defeated **Kings of Wrestling** (**Chris Hero** & **Claudio Castagnoli**) ... Heavyweight champion **Roderick Strong** pinned **El Generico**.
(01-28-10)

—Chad Simplicio

ANAHEIM—Mach-1 Wrestling at the American Sports Center: **Nick Madrid** pinned **Gary Jay** ... **Leo Blaze** pinned **Mat Fitchett** ... **Kyle Webb** pinned **Davey Vega** ... **Todd Chandler** & **Brandon Parker** defeated **The Submission Squad** (**Pierre Abernathy** & **Evan Gelistico**) ... **Ridiculoso** pinned **Brian Weston** ... **Willie Mack** pinned **Peter Avalon**.
(01-21-11)

—Chad Simplicio

OCEANSIDE—SoCal Pro Wrestling at the Boys & Girls Club: **Todd Chandler** & **Kid Caramba** defeated **2 Skinny White Guys** (**Peter Avalon** & **Nick Lovin**) ... **Jason Allgood** pinned **Eddie Randle** ... **Jason Redondo** pinned **James MacFarlane** ... **Johnny Paradise** defeated **SoCal Crazy** in a four-corners leather strap match ... **Adam Pearce** defeated **Ricky Mandel** by submission ... **Tommy Wilson** pinned heavyweight champion **Hector Canales** for the title.
(01-15-11)

—Chad Simplicio

LOS ANGELES—Empire Wrestling Federation at the Covina Auditorium: **Mexican Warrior** pinned **Freddy Bravo** ... **Jeremy Jaeger** vs. **Mike Maze** ended in a draw ... **Brandon Gatson** beat **Tommy Wilson** by submission ... **Johnny Starr** defeated **Roger Ruiz** ... **Los Luchas** beat **Anchors Away** ... American champion **Terex** pinned **Chris Kadillak** ... **Scorpio Sky** beat **Ryan Taylor** by DQ.
(01-14-11)

—Mike Lano

HOLLYWOOD—NWA Championship Wrestling from Hollywood at the Regency Showcase Theatre: **Famous B** defeated **Cedric the Hitman** by DQ ... **Rico Dynamite** defeated **Manimal** by submission ... Heritage tag team champions **Natural Selection** (**Shawn Rickers** & **Brian Cage**) defeated **Rasche Brown** & **Slymm** in an Open Challenge match ... **Ricky Mandel** defeated **SoCal Crazy** by countout ... **Todd Chandler** & **Brandon Parker** defeated **Ray Rosas** & **Lucha Machine** ... NWA champion **Adam Pearce** pinned **Joey Ryan** ... **RockNES Monsters** (**Johnny Yuma** & **Johnny Goodtime**) defeated **The Tribe** (**Navajo Warrior** & **Hawaiian Lyon**) ... **Peter Avalon** pinned **Andrew Hellman** ... **Austin Aries** beat **Scorpio Sky** by submission ... **Robbie Phoenix** vs. **Ray Ramos** ended in a no-contest ... **Buggy** pinned **Lucky O'Shea** ... Famous B pinned **Tommy Wilson** ... **Buggy** & **Thunderkitty** defeated **Lucky O'Shea** & **Tab Jackson** ... **Willie Mack** vs. **Joey Kaos** ended in a no-contest ... **Colt Cabana** defeated **Austin Aries** in a battle royal.
(01-08-11)

—Chad Simplicio

Dolph Ziggler's sleeperhold actually proved to be his undoing. As World champion Edge struggled to free himself, the referee was knocked to the mat. Seizing the opportunity, Edge used his outlawed spear to score the pinfall.

Randy Orton's RKO (above left) seemed to signal the end of The Miz' unlikely reign as WWE champion, but The New Nexus—led by CM Punk—changed the course of history. After delivering a Go To Sleep, Punk places Miz on top of Orton and scurries from the ring (above right).

COLORADO

GOLDEN—IWF at the Buffalo Rose: **Trajan Ender** defeated **Rob Ryzin** ... **Bronx & Joseph A. Kincade** defeated **Brandon Morris & Robert Romero** ... **Hoodlum** beat **Arik Angel** by DQ ... **Prodigee** defeated **Jack Mecidal** ... **La Bestia** beat **Golden Star** ... **Juntsu** beat **Bud Doobie** ... **Ronin the Rock-n-Roll Vampire & Rose Thorn** defeated **Paul Stetich & Sensi Dalton** ... **Johnny Crash** defeated **Damien Payne**.
(01-16-11)

—Tamera Halbeisen

DELAWARE

NEWARK—East Coast Wresling Assoication at the Boys & Girls Club: **Corey Blaze** defeated **Mr. Ooh La La** ... **Papadon** defeated **Cono Cappuccia** ... **JJ Crew Guy & Timothy Richards** beat **Matt Saigon & Damian Dragon** ... **Travis Blake** defeated **Courageous Cruz** ... **Ace Darling** defeated **Aden Chambers** by DQ ... **Team MackTion (TJ & Kirby Mack)** beat **Aden Chambers & Julian Starr** ... **Kid America** defeated **Jason Leigh** ... Mid-Atlantic champion **Chris Wylde** defeated **Mozart Fontaine** ... Tag team champions **The Best Around (TJ Cannon & Bruce Maxwell)** defeated **The Heavyweights (Dan Eckos & Sean Royal)** ... Heavyweight champion **MEGA** defeated **Glen Osbourne** in a chain match.
(01-15-11)

— Joe Zanolle

FLORIDA

ORLANDO—TNA at the Impact Zone: **Ink Inc** defeated **Gunner Mupph & Muffin** ... **Bully Ray & The Pope** vs. **Brother Devon & Samoa Joe** ended in a no–contest ... **Jeremy Buck** defeated **Douglas Williams & Jay Lethal** ... **Mickie James** defeated **Sarita** in a taped fist match ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** beat **Jeff Hardy**.
(02-03-11)

—Will Hengelbrock

TAMPA—TNA at the Impact Zone: **Angelina Love** defeated **Tara, Madison Rayne, Mickie James, Velvet, & Sarita** in a six-way ... **Max Buck** defeated **Amazing Red & Chris Sabin** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** defeated **Matt Hardy** ... **Immortal (James Storm, Robert Roode, Kazarian, Rob Terry, Gunner, Murphy, & Jeff Jarrett)** defeated **Kurt Angle & Crimson** in a handicap match.
(01-27-11)

—Will Hengelbrock

ORLANDO—TNA at the Impact Zone: **Mickie James** defeated **Sarita, Velvet Sky, & Madison Rayne** ... **Matt Morgan** pinned **Rob Terry** ... X division champion **Kazarian** defeated **Jay Lethal** ... **Jeff Hardy** beat **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Beer Money Inc. (James Storm & Robert Roode)** beat **Mr. Anderson & Rob Van Dam**.
(01-21-11)

—Will Hengelbrock

ORLANDO—I Believe in Wrestling at The Downtown Rec Complex: **J.D. Amazing** beat **Shooter Storm** ... **Ricky Young** beat **Mike Reed** ... **Jack LeDuc** defeated **Damien Darling** ... **Santana** beat **Kat** ... AWA Florida tag team champions **Jerrelle Clark & Nooie Lee** beat **Gus Money & Mike Cruz** ... **Alex Pourteau & The James Boys** defeate **Mike Patrick, Wayne VanDyke, & Brian Badical** ... **Q.T. Marshall** beat **Brandon Scherer** ... SCW Florida heavyweight champion **Ray Beez** beat **Sean Davis**.
(01-08-11)

—Duane Long

GEORGIA

CORNELIA—NWA Anarchy at the Anarchy Arena: **Youth Gone Wild (Anthony Henry & Dustin Knight)** defeated **Tommy Daniels & C.B. Gibson** ... **Jacoby Boykins, Aden Chambers, & Skirra Corvus** beat **Jacob Ashworth, Johnny Dangerous, & Lane Vassar** ... **Tank** pinned **Andrew Pendleton III** ... **Shaun Tempers** pinned **Todd Sexton** ... **Adryan Hawkins** pinned **Jeff Lewis** ... Tag team champions **The Hate Junkies (Dany Only & Stryknyn)** defeated **Andrew Alexander & Billy Buck** ... Young Lions champions **Slim J** defeated **Bo Newsome** in a no-DQ lumberjack match ... **Shadow Jackson & Phill Shatter** defeated **Se7en & Nemesis** by DQ.
(01-22-11)

—Dale Cleveland

EASTANOLLEE—SWA at The BoonDocks Arena: **Ballenger** pinned **Jimmy Lee** ... **Playa** pinned **Zachary Blane** ... **Asap** pinned **Droxx** ... **James Boulevard & Nobody** defeated **2 Guys 1 Cup (Kevin Blue & Chris Spectra)** ... **La Costa Nostra (Jon Hogan & Bam Bam Bradshaw)** defeated **LiveWire (Stevie Bryant & Venomous)** ... U.S. champion **Lance Christopher** pinned **Alexander Phoenix** ... **Bad Stuff (Bad Jack & Hotstuff Adam Mabry) & Casanova** defeated **The Reddnecks (Tommy Sawyer, Billy Starr, & Panhead Nelson)**
(01-22-11)

—Dale Cleveland

STATESBORO—APW at the APW Slam Shack: **Jeremy Young** pinned heavyweight champion **Scotty Bullwinkle** for the title ... **Mr. P** beat **La Ninja** ... **Slim Sexy** beat **High Roller Haize** ... **Chris Lightning** pinned **Jay Clinton** ... **Titan** pinned **Lamar Phillips** ... **Cowboy Raines** beat **David Powers** ... **Scotty Bullwinkle & Titan** won a 12-man battle royal.
(01-22-11)

—Tommy Nero

AVONDALE ESTATES—Platinum Championship Wrestling at the Academy Theater: **Curry Kid** pinned **Brandon Kage** ... **The Phantom** defeated **Pandora** by submission ... **De La Vega** and **The Washington Bullets (Jon Williams & Trey Williams)** pinned **The Vandal, Master Jae, & Mr. Jones** ... **Chad Silva** pinned **Zach Daniels** ... **Grotesque** defeated **Chip Day** ... **The Konkrete Gorillaz (Nemesis, Jay Fury, & Brian Blaze)** defeated **CAMPUS Strike Force** ... **Andy Anderson** pinned **Warhorse #2** ... **Curry Kid** won a platinum battle royal.
(01-21-11)

—Stephen Platinum

ROYSTON—Alternative Pro Wrestling at the Royston Gym: **The Friday Night Franchise (Ryan Michaels & Matt Sells)** defeated **Johnny Dangerous & John Skyler** ... **Vincent Sykes** pinned **Chris Spectra** ... **Tommy Daniels & James Boulevard** defeated **Kevin Ballenger & C.B. Gibson** ... North Georgia champion **Dustin Knight** defeated **Skirra Corvus** by DQ ... **Jacob Ashworth** pinned **Scott Mason** ... **Kevin Duncan Enterprises (Jacoby Boykins & Chaos)** defeated **Shadow Jackson & Manchild** ... Southern States champion **Jeremy Vain** beat **Chris King** by DQ.
(01-21-11)

—Brett Wolverton

EASTANOLLEE—Southern Wrestling Association at The BoonDocks Arena: **Skadoosh Roosh** pinned U.S. champion **Lance Christopher** for the title ... **Alicia Silvers** pinned **Laura Leigh** to become the first women's champion ... **LiveWire (Venomous & Stevie Bryant), Alexander Phoenix, & Team Throwdown (Playa & Asap)** defeated **Team T.A.G. (James Boulevard, Kevin Blue, & Chris Spectra), Droxx, & Krymsin** in an elimination match ... **Casanova** pinned cruiserweight champion **Jimmy Lee** for the title ... Premier heavyweight champion **Panhead**

Nelson pinned **Jon Hogan** in a Mafia Rules match ... **Bad Stuff** defeated tag team champions **Billy Starr** & **Tommy Sawyer** in an Ultimate X match for the title.
(01-08-11)

—Dale Cleveland

AUGUSTA—WWE Raw at the James Brown Arena: **Daniel Bryan** defeated **Ted DiBiase Jr.** and **Primo** ... **R-Truth** defeated **Alberto del Rio** ... **Santino Marella** & **Vladimir Kozlov** defeated **The Usos** ... **Yoshi Tatsu** beat **Zack Ryder** ... **Gail Kim** & **Tamina** defeated **Maryse** & **Alicia Fox** ... **John Morrison** beat **Sheamus** in a streetfight ... **David Hart Smith** defeated **Tyson Kidd** ... **CM Punk** defeated **Mark Henry** ... WWE champion **The Miz** beat **Randy Orton** ... Randy Orton defeated **Alex Riley** in a no-holds-barred match.
(01-07-11)

—Chris Cushman

ILLINOIS

O'FALLON—St. Louis Anarchy at the Knights of Columbus Hall: **The Hooligans** (**Devin** & **Mason Cutter**) & **Gorgeous Jordan Lacey** defeated **Shorty Biggs**, **Adam Raw**, & **Darin Childs** ... **A.C.H.** & **J.T. Lamotta** double-pinned **Tony Kozina**, **Darin Corbin**, **Shane Hollister**, and **Billy McNeil** in a six-way dance ... **Dingo** pinned **Mat Fitchett** ... **Davey Richards** beat **Davey Vega** ... **Akira Tozawa** defeated **Gerald James** ... **Arik Cannon** pinned **Kyle O'Reilly** ... **Robert D. Evans** beat **Rachel Summerlyn** ... **Evan Gelistico** defeated **Dan Walsh**.
(01-08-11)

—Patrick Brandmeyer

INDIANA

HAMMOND—WWE Smackdown at the Hammond Civic Center: **Alberto Del Rio** beat **R Truth** ... **JTG** beat **Tyler Reks** ... **Trent Barreta** beat **Drew McIntyre** ... **Big Show** defeated **Wade Barrett** ... **Beth Phoenix** & **Natalya** beat **Layla** & **Michelle McCool** ... **Chris Masters** beat **Jack Swagger** ... **Edge** beat **Kane** and **Dolph Ziggler** in a triple-threat match.
(01-23-11)

—Steve Gerweck

LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS—TNA at the UNO Lakefront Arena: **Tommy Dreamer** beat **Robbie E** ... **Angelina Love** beat **Sarita** ... **Brother Devon** defeated **Bully Ray** in a tables match ... **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) beat **Eric Young** & **Orlando Jordan** ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Samoa Joe** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** defeated **Matt Morgan**.
(02-03-11)

—Vernon Sox

SHREVEPORT—WWE at the Hirsh Coliseum: **John Morrison** won a 22-man battle royal ... U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** defeated **Ted DiBiase Jr.** by submission ... **Alberto Del Rio** defeated **R-Truth** by submission ... WWE tag team champions **Santino Marella** & **Vladimir Kozlov** beat **The Nexus** (**David Otunga** & **Husky Harris**) ... WWE champion **The Miz** defeated **John Morrison** ... **Beth Phoenix**, **Natalya**, **Eve**, & **Kelly Kelly** beat **Layla**, **Rosa Mendes**, **Maryse**, & **Alicia Fox** ... **CM Punk** defeated **Mark Henry** ... Intercontinental champion **Kofi Kingston** defeated **Dolph Ziggler** ... World champion **Edge** defeated **Kane** in a streetfight.
(01-16-11)

—Vernon Sox

MARYLAND

HAGERSTOWN—TNA at the Maryland Theatre: X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Robbie E** and **Brian Kendrick** in a triple-threat match ... Knockout champion **Madison Rayne** beat **Mickie James** ... TV champion **Abyss** defeated **Douglas Williams** ... **The Motor City Machine Guns** (**Chris Sabin** & **Alex Shelley**) defeated **Generation Me** (**Max** & **Jeremy Buck**) ... **Samoa Joe** beat **D'Angelo Dinero** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** beat **Jeff Jarrett**.
(01-16-11)

—Kent Richards

UPPER MARLBORO—TNA at the Show Place Arena: **Kazarian** defeated **Brian Kendrick** and **Robbie E** ... Knockouts champion **Madison Rayne** defeated **Mickie James** ... **Abyss** defeated **Douglas Williams** ... **The Motor City Machine Guns** (**Chris Sabin** & **Alex Shelley**) defeated **Generation Me** (**Max** & **Jeremy Buck**) ... **Samoa Joe** defeated **D'Angelo Dinero** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** defeated **Jeff Jarrett**.
(01-15-11)

—Kent Richards

PARKVILLE—Eastern Wrestling Alliance at Tall Cedars Hall: **Alexander James** defeated **Wes Mercer** & **Adam Cole** ... **Joshua Nuyati** & **Danny Havoc** defeated **Chace Rawlings** & **Matt Wylde** ... **Blood** & **John Berg** vs. **Cole Calloway** & **Bam Bam** ended in a double-DQ ... **Shaun Cannon** pinned **Chris Burns** ... **Jim Christian** beat **Nui Tofiga** by DQ ... **Ryan McBride** defeated **Apollo Cruz** by DQ ... **Drolix** pinned **Kindred** ... **Fed Up** (**C-Fed** & **G-Fed**) defeated **The Hell Cats** (**Jimmy Starz** & **Sexy Steve**).
(01-08-11)

—Marq Madison

When she woke up that day, Eve Torres didn't even know that she would be wrestling for the Divas title. After being added to what had been scheduled as a three-way featuring champion Natalya and Lay-Cool by order of the Raw general manager, Eve won the title by pinning Layla.

DUNDALK—Maryland Championship Wrestling at the North Point Plaza: **Ruckus** defeated **Devon Moore** ... **Jimmy Cicero** pinned **Bobby Shields** ... **Ronnie Zukko** beat **Cole Calloway** ... **C-Fed** beat **Rich Myers** ... **Nui Tofiga** pinned **Earl the Pearl** ... **James Anthony** defeated **Drolix** ... **Mia Yim** defeated **Melissa Coates** ... **Josh Daniels** defeated **Alexander James** ... **Cobian** beat **Tyler Hilton** ... **Ryan McBride** defeated **Christian York**.
(01-01-11)

—Tim Walker

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON—WWE Royal Rumble at TD Garden: World champion **Edge**defeated **Dolph Ziggler** ... Heavyweight champion **The Miz** pinned **Randy Orton** ... **Eve Torres** defeated **Layla**, **Michelle McCool**, & Divas champion **Natalya** for the title in a four-way match ...**Alberto Del Rio** won the 40-man Royal Rumble.
(01-30-11)

—Dave Ratty

SPRINGFIELD—WWE at the MassMutual Center: **R-Truth** defeated **Drew McIntyre** ... Tag team champions **Santino Marella** & **Vladimir Kozlov** defeated **The Usos** ... **Zack Ryder** vs. **Yoshi Tatsu** ended in a no-contest ... **Big Show** beat **Wade Barrett** ... Intercontinental Champion **Kofi Kingston** beat **Dolph Ziggler** ... U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** beat **Alex Riley** ... **Maryse** & **Gail Kim** defeated **The Bella Twins** ... **Randy Orton** & **John Cena** defeated **The Miz** & **CM Punk**.
(01-29-11)

—Dave Ratty

LOWELL—Chaotic Wrestling at the Polish American Veterans Club: **Mikaze** pinned New England champion **Max Bauer** for the title ... **Demon Ortiz** pinned **Elia Markopoulos** ... **Brian Milonas** pinned **Jimmy Milonas** ... **Bryan Logan** & **Matt Logan** vs. **Chase Del Monte** & **Julian Starr** ended in a no-contest ... **Gino Martino** pinned **Psycho** ... **Nikki Roxx** won a gauntlet match ... **Alex Arion** vs. **Brian Fury** ended in a no-contest.
(01-21-11)

—Dave Ratty

MELROSE—Millennium Wrestling Federation at Memorial Hall: **Candyman** pinned **Elia Markopoulos** ... **Beau Douglas** pinned **East Coast Cowboy** ... **Dylan Kage** pinned **Benny Jux** ... TV champion **Brian Fury** pinned **Eddie Edwards** ... **Bobby Ocean** beat **Doink the Clown** by DQ ... **Julian Starr** pinned **Scott Reed** ... **Demon Ortiz** pinned **Jay Freddie** ... **Jay Lethal** pinned **John Walters** ... **Daniel Bryan** beat **Tommaso Ciampa** by

submission ... **Awesome Kong** pinned **J-Busta** in a steel cage match ... Dylan Kage pinned **Todd Hanson** in a steel cage match ... **Abyss** pinned **Brian Milonas** in a steel cage match ... Heavyweight champion **Slyck Wagner Brown** beat **Homicide** in a steel cage match.
(01-08-11)

—Dave Ratty

MICHIGAN

DETROIT—WWE Raw at the Joe Louis Arena: **Sheamus** & **Alberto Del Rio** defeated **John Morrison** & **Mark Henry** ... Divas champion **Natalya** defeated **Melina** ...**The Miz vs. Edge** ended in a no-contest ... **Ted DiBiase**, **Maryse**, & **Alicia Fox** defeated **The Bella Twins** & **Bryan Daniel** ... **Michael McGillicutty** & **Husky Harris** defeated **Vladimir Kozlov** & **Santino Marella** ... **CM Punk** vs. **Wade Barrett** ended in a double-DQ.
(01-24-11)

—Farook Razak

KALAMAZOO—WWE Smackdown at Wings Stadium: **Alberto Del Rio** beat **R-Truth** by submission ... **JTG** pinned **Tyler Reks** ... **Trent Baretta** pinned **Drew McIntyre** ... **Cody Rhodes** vs. **Percy Watson** ended in a no-contest ... **Big Show** pinned **Wade Barrett** ... **Beth Phoenix** & **Natalya** beat **Layla** & **Michelle McCool** by submission ... **Chris Masters** beat **Jack Swagger** by submission ... **Edge** pinned **Kane** in a hardcore match.
(01-22-11)

—Farook Razak

MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS—WWE Raw at the Target Center: **Mark Henry** pinned **Zack Ryder** ... **Santino Marella** & **Vladimir Kozlov** defeated **Michael McGillicutty** & **David Otunga** ... **Yoshi Tatsu** pinned **Primo** ... **John Morrison** beat **Sheamus** ... **Daniel Bryan** defeated **Ted DiBiase Jr.** by submission ... **Eve Torres** & **Tamina** beat **Alicia Fox** & **Melina** ... **John Cena** defeated **CM Punk** in a streetfight ... WWE champion **The Miz** defeated **Randy Orton** ... Randy Orton pinned **Alex Riley** in a no-holds-barred match.
(02-04-11)

—Wayne McCarty

MISSISSIPPI

JACKSON—Mississippi Championship Wrestling at Jackson Roadmap Arena: **Mike Carter** defeated **Rondale Roosevelt** ... **Whiskey Hangover** defeated **Ben Smith** in a handicap match ... **Rick Morgan** defeated **Monty Warbucks** ... **Mike Carter** vs. **Brother Love** ended in a no-contest ... **Calvin Rose** beat **Jason Rose**.
(01-22-11)

—Daphne Bowen

McADAMS—TWE at the TWE Arena: **Reaper** defeated **Jon Evans** by DQ ... **Atomic Kid** beat **Rick Morgan** by DQ ... **Dusty Bass** pinned **Mike Cannon** ... **Giant Hillbilly** pinned **Ant** ... **Southern Outlaws** (Jon Evans & Rick Morgan) vs. Reaper & Atomic Kid ended in a no-contest.
(01-15-11)

—Kendra Aldy

The first-ever 40-man Royal Rumble match featured all kinds of twists and surprises, including the return of Booker T, who proves to Mason Ryan that he can still do much of what he did when he broke into the sport in 1989.

JACKSON—Mississippi Championship Wrestling at the Jackson Roadmap Center: **Brother Love** defeated **Anton Leveigh** ... **Capitol City Muscle** pinned **Whiskey Hangover** ... **Wild Childs of the City** beat **Rick Morgan** & **Justin Mathews** ... **Mike Carter** defeated **Joey Able** by DQ ... **Calvin Rose** pinned **Monty Warbucks**.
(01-08-11)

—Michael Carter

MISSOURI

ST. LOUIS—Mid-Missouri Wrestling Alliance/Southern Illinois Championship Wrestling at the South Broadway Athletic Club: **Stevie K** pinned **David Osborn** ... **Max Archer** defeated **Chase King** ... **Ace Hawkins** vs. **Jaysin Static** ended in a time-limit draw ... **Brandon Espinosa** beat **LaMarcus Clinton** ... **Gary Jackson** defeated **Wayne Mitchell** ... **Dave Vaughn** beat **The Big Texan** by DQ ... **The Lumberjacks** (**Abe** & **Gabe**) defeated **Tony Raze** & **Jimmy D**.
(01-15-11)

—Patrick Brandmeyer

NEW JERSEY

TRENTON—WWE Raw at the National Bank Center: **Daniel Bryan** beat **Tyson Kidd**, **Ted DiBiase**, & **William Regal** in a four-way match ... **Mark Henry** beat **Mason Ryan** by DQ ... **David Otunga**, **Husky Harris**, **Mason Ryan**, & **Michael McGillicuty** defeated Mark Henry, **Yoshi Tatsu**, & **Vladimir Kozlov** ... **John Morrison** beat **Sheamus** ... **Eve Torres**, **Gail Kim**, & **Tamina** defeated **Alicia Fox**, **Maryse**, & **Melina** ... **John Cena** beat **CM Punk** ... WWE champion **The Miz** beat **Randy Orton** ... Randy Orton defeated **Alex Riley** in a no-holds-barred match.
(01-21-11)

—Wayne Daly

BELLMAWR—OTW at the Old Time Wrestling Entertainment Center: **I.M. Smarter** pinned **Mike Rugenus** ... **Chris Bohern** defeated **Jake Reyes** ... **John Graber** pinned **George Zlotniki** ... **Anthony Haynes** defeated **Brian Johnson** ... **Eddie Hawkins** & Anthony Haynes defeated Brian Johnson & I.M. Smarter ... **Craig Nash** vs. **Luis Martinez** ended in a no-contest.
(01-15-11)

—Brian E. Johnson

NEW YORK

UNIONDALE—WWE Smackdown at the Nassau Coliseum: **Justin Gabriel** & **Heath Slater** beat **Vladimir Kozlov** & **Santino Marella** ... **Drew McIntyre** beat **Kofi Kingston** ... **Rey Mysterio Jr.** defeated **Jack Swagger** ... **Kane** beat **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Wade Barrett** defeated **Big Show** ... **Edge** & **Kelly Kelly** defeated **Dolph Ziggler**, **Layla**, & **Michelle McCool**.
(02-04-11)

—Chris Godfrey

POUGHKEEPSIE—Northeast Wrestling at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center: **Hurricane Helms** beat **Brian Anthony** ... **Hale Collins** defeated **Vik Dalishus**, **Tommaso Ciampa**, **Ryan McBride**, and **Sabu** in

a five-man ladder match ... **Roxxi** defeated **Mia Yim** ... **Sgt. Slaughter** & **Pvt. Jeff Starr** beat **Max Bauer** & **Romeo Roselli** ... **Jerry Lawler** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** in a steel cage match ... Heavyweight champion **Matt Taven** beat **Hale Collins** by DQ ... **MVP** pinned **Matt Hardy**.
(01-15-11)

—Tim Walker

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE—Ring of Honor at the Metrolina Tradeshow Expo: **The Bravado Brothers** beat **Adam Cole** & **Kyle O'Reilly** ... **Rhett Titus** defeated **Caprice Coleman** ... **Colt Cabana** defeated **Grizzly Redwood** ... **Mike Bennett** beat **Cedric Alexander** ... TV champion **Christopher Daniels** defeated **Claudio Castagnoli** ... **Andy Ridge** defeated **Steve Corino** ... **Davey Richards** beat **Chris Hero** ... **El Generico** defeated **Homicide**, **Kenny King**, and **Mark Briscoe** ... Heavyweight champion **Roderick Strong** defeated **Jay Briscoe**.
(01-15-11)

—Brett Wolverton

FOREST CITY—Southern Wrestling Association at the National Guard Armory: **Manchild** pinned **Phillip Michael Grant** in a triple threat-match ... Grand Prix Pure Wrestling champion **Rob Killjoy** defeated **Derek Ryze** by DQ ... **Mike McCloud** pinned **Shea Shea McGrady** ... **PG-13** (**Will Demented** & **Joey Rhymer**) defeated **Crunk** & **Chaos** and **The BorderBillies** (**Stumpy Grimmitt** & **Will Balderas**) in a triple-threat match ... **Wicked** & **Thug** defeated **Ric Hart** & **Rocky Xavier Starr** ... **Steven Walters** pinned **Chris Hamrick** ... **Jeff Hamrick** pinned **Myric Moore** ... Heavyweight champion Derrick Driver pinned **Kid Chaos**.
(01-15-11)

—Brett Wolverton

OHIO

CINCINNATI—WWE Smackdown at the U.S. Bank Arena: **Percy Watson** defeated **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Layla** & **Michelle McCool** beat **Kelly Kelly** & **Kaitlyn** ... **Drew McIntyre** beat **JTG** ... **Kofi Kingston** won a battle royal ... **Rey Mysterio Jr.** & Kofi Kingston beat **Alberto Del Rio** & **Kane** ... **Big Show** defeated **Slater** ... **Edge** & **Randy Orton** beat **The Miz** & **Dolph Ziggler**.
(01-28-11)

—James Rowland

YOUNGSTOWN—WWE Raw at the Covelli Centre: U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** defeated **Tyson Kidd**, **William Regal**, and **Ted DiBiase Jr.** ... **The Nexus** defeated **Yoshi Tatsu**, **Mark Henry**, **Santino Marella**, & **Vladimir Kozlov** in an eight-man tag team match ... **John Morrison** defeated **Sheamus** ... **Eve Torres**, **Gail Kim**, & **Tamina** beat **Maryse**, **Alicia Fox**, & **Melina** ... **John Cena** defeated **CM Punk** ... WWE champion **The Miz** defeated **Randy Orton**.
(01-23-11)

—James Rowland

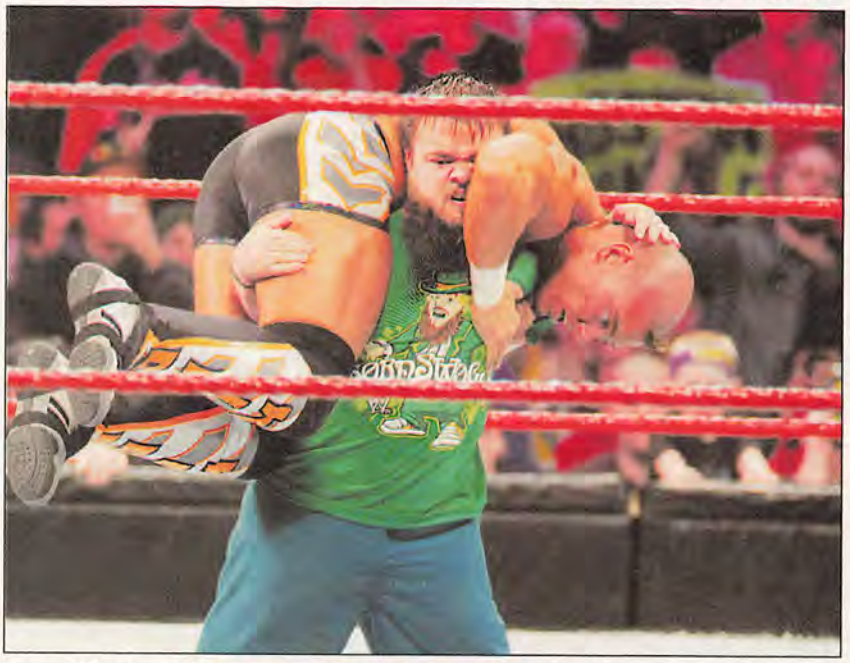
ASHTABULA—Magnum Pro Wrestling at Mother of Sorrows Gym: **Kombat Kid** won a battle royal ... **Shawn Blaze** beat **Isaac Montana** ... **Tuff Tina** beat **Bobbinette Carey** ... **Jason Bane** defeated **Mr. R.B.I.** ... **Jay Ice** beat **Drew Forge** ... **Angel Camacho** beat **Luis Diamante** by DQ ... **The Bouncer** defeated **Moondog Scrap** in a dog collar match ... **Mike Rayne** & **Scott Prodigy** beat **Axel** & **Aftermath** ... **Seth Allen** beat **Lamont Williams** by DQ.
(01-08-11)

—Johnny James

OKLAHOMA

TULSA—WWE Smackdown at the BOK Center: **Alberto Del Rio** defeated **R-Truth** by submission ... **Beth Phoenix** defeated **Layla** ... **Rey Mysterio Jr.** beat **Cody Rhodes** ... **Jack Swagger** defeated **Kofi Kingston** ... **Drew McIntyre** defeated **Trent Baretta** ... **Justin Gabriel** defeated **Edge**.
(01-21-11)

—Tim Hyde



Tyson Kidd may have been picked by our "*PWI* Poll" panelists as the Most Underrated Wrestler in the sport, but by the looks of things, maybe Hornswoggle should have received some consideration!

PENNSYLVANIA

STATE COLLEGE—WWE Raw at the Bryce Jordan Center: U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** beat **Ted DiBiase Jr.**, **William Regal**, and **Tyson Kidd** in a four-way match ... **New Nexus** (**Husky Harris**, **Michael McGillicutty**, & **David Otunga**) beat **Mark Henry**, **Vladimir Kozlov**, & **Yoshi Tatsu** in a six-man match ... **John Morrison** beat **Sheamus** ... **Eve**, **Gail Kim**, & **Tamina** beat **Maryse**, **Alicia Fox**, & **Melina**. ... **John Cena** defeated **CM Punk** ... WWE champion **The Miz** beat **Randy Orton** ... Randy Orton defeated **Alex Riley**.
(01-22-11)

—Tom Schied

PITTSBURGH— KSWA at the Lawrenceville Moose: **Shawn Blanchard** & **Lou Martin** defeated **Great Toyota** & **Mike Buda** ... **Del Douglas** defeated **Jay Flash** ... **Tony Johnson** vs. **Shane Starr** ended in a draw ... **Anthony Alexander** defeated **Kris Kash** ... **The Latin Assassin** defeated **Mitch Napier**... Lou Martin won Battle Bowl III.
(01-15-11)

—Marty Lyons

READING—TNA at the Sovereign Performing Arts Center: X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Robbie E** and **Brian Kendrick** in a three-way... Knockouts champion **Madison Rayne** defeated **Mickie James** ... TV champion **Abyss** beat **Douglas Williams** ... **The Motor City Machine Guns** (**Chris Sabin** & **Alex Shelley**) beat **Generation Me** (**Max** & **Jeremy Buck**) ... **Samoa Joe** defeated **D'Angelo Dinero** ... Heavyweight champion **Mr. Anderson** pinned **Jeff Jarrett**.
(01-14-11)

—Tom Schied

RHODE ISLAND

PROVIDENCE—WWE Raw at the Dunkin' Donuts Center: Tag team champions **Vladimir Kozlov** & **Santino Marella** defeated **Husky Harris** & **Michael McGillicutty** ... U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** beat **Tyson Kidd** by submission ... World champion **Edge** defeated WWE champion **The Miz** in a non-title match ... **Michelle McCool** & **Layla** defeated **Eve Torres** & **Natalya** ... **Jerry Lawler** defeated **John Morrison**, **John Cena**, **Randy Orton**, **R-Truth**, **Sheamus**, and **CM Punk** in a rumble match.
(01-31-11)

—Marc Middleton

SOUTH CAROLINA

SPARTANBURG—American Pro Wrestling at the American Coliseum: **T.J. Boss** & **Scotty Claymore** defeated **Team Kryptonite** (**J-Dog** & **Robert Mack**) ... **Jay Batista** pinned **Pretty Boy Rob** ... Tag team champions **The Brigade** (**Erik Anton** & **Chad Wilson**) defeated **Dusty Money** & **Shadow Ray** ... **Chief Jay Eagle** pinned **Sigmon** ... **Dirty** & **Nick Fury** defeated **Christopher Stevens** & **Michael Kane** ... **Ricky Morton** pinned U.S. cham-

2 MAGAZINES IN 1!

THE WRESTLER/INSIDE WRESTLING BACK ISSUES

Vol. 2, 2005: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "The Angle Zone: Enter At Your Own Risk!" **60-Minute Interview:** Bob Orton Jr. **Also Inside:** Booker T, Michaels-Christian, AJ Styles, Ray "Big Bossman" Traylor. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Edge Of Insanity! Has He Ruined His Future?" **Also Inside:** Scott D'Amore, Paul London, Orlando Jordan, Joey Matthews, Kim Neilson, Kenny Bolin, Dunn & Marcos, Simon Dean, Mana, Kane-Snitsky, Magnus & Daivari, Pat Kenney.

Vol. 3, 2005: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "Hogan Steals WrestleMania!" **60-Minute Interview:** Terry Funk. **Also Inside:** Cornette vs. Heenan, Petey Williams, 10 unforgettable WrestleMania moments. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "WrestleMania 21: The Real Winners & Losers." **Also Inside:** Alexis Laree, Lance Hoyt, Shane Twins, Jack Evans, Val Venis, Arch Kincaid, Mike Mondo, Alere Littlefeather, Jeff Hammond, O.C. Boyz, Shawn Michaels.

Vol. 5, 2006: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "Our Demand To The IOC: Strip Angle Of His Medal!" **60-Minute Interview:** George Steele. **Also Inside:** Randy Orton, Bobby Lashley, Ken Kennedy. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Christian's TNA Gamble: If He Wins, Everybody Wins." **Also Inside:** Aaron Stevens, Homicide, Boogeyman, Raven-Riley, Talia & April, Rory & Robbie McAlister, Colt Cabana, Mickie James.

Vol. 7, 2006: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "Rey Mysterio Jr.: Too Much Man For His Own Good?" **60-Minute Interview:** J.J. Dillon. **Also Inside:** Kane, Styles-Daniels-Joe, Teddy Hart. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Sting Or Steve: The Makeup On A Man Or … The Make Up Of A Man." **Also Inside:** Brent Albright, Nattie Neidhart, Paul Birchall, Jay Lethal, Bobby Roode, Jimmy Rave, Ruckus, Kid Kash.

Vol. 9, 2006: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "'Big Brother' Batista: 'Anybody Who Abused Rey Will Pay!'" **60-Minute Interview:** Harley Race. **Also Inside:** DeGeneration X, Trish-Mickie, Chris Sabin. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** Extreme Success: "One Night That Changed The Face Of Wrestling." **Also Inside:** Chris Masters, Eric Young, Alex Shelley, A1, David Young, Sonjay Dutt, The Naturals, Matt Bentley, Elix Skipper, Homicide, Johnny Devine.

Vol. 11, 2007: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "Blame Sting! He Could Have Prevented The War With Christian!" **90-Minute Interview:** Bobby Heenan. **Also Inside:** Paul Heyman, Finlay & Regal, Mick Foley. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Trish Stratus Tribute Cover." **Also Inside:** Lita, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards.

Vol. 13, 2007: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "DeGeneration X-Plosion! Brace Yourself For The HHH vs. HBK Feud!" **90-Minute Interview:** Paul Orndorff. **Also Inside:** WSX, Christian-Edge-Rhino, Bobby Lashley. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "WrestleMania Time Capsules—WWE's Biggest Event Through The Years." **Also Inside:** Sting.

Vol. 15, 2007: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "WWE Overhaul! Our Plan To Shuffle The Deck." **90-Minute Interview:** Larry Zbyszko. **Also Inside:** McMahon & ECW, Mike Awesome, Colon-Flair. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "What's Up With A.J.? Some Words Of Wisdom From A Man Who Knows." **Also Inside:** Bobby Lashley, stars' greatest covers.

Vol. 17, 2007: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "Melina: Too Beautiful To Be Taken Seriously?" 90-Minute Interview: Magnum T.A. **Also Inside:** Introducing/Looking Back. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "The Smackdown Curse—This Is The Title You Don't Want To Win." **Also Inside:** James Storm, Hardys vs. Cade & Murdoch, Memphis Revival, John Cena, baldies.

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Vol. 31, 2010: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "TNA World Champion AJ Styles: The Untold Story Of How Sting Saved His Career." **90-Minute Interview:** Ivan Koloff. **Also Inside:** Danielson & McGuinness, Rey Mysterio Jr. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Hot WrestleMania Rumor! John Cena vs. The Rock." **Also Inside:** The Undertaker, What's Ahead For 2010.

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Vol. 33, 2010: **Cover Story—*The Wrestler*:** "How Ric Flair Whoooooed AJ Styles … How Sting Will Get Him Back." **90-Minute Interview:** Rick Martel. **Also Inside:** Hornswoggle, Davey Richards, The Hardys. **Cover Story—*Inside Wrestling*:** "Heart-Broken Kid: Shawn Tried To Be Nice … Now He Has To Be Himself." **Also Inside:** C.M. Punk, D'Angelo Dinero, body parts challenge.

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pion **Matt Marshall** in a non-title match ... **Mack Truck** defeated **Chad Colt** by submission ... Dirty & Nick Fury defeated **Brute Force II** (**Pain** & **Punishment**) ... Shadow Ray pinned Sigmon ... Tag team champions The Brigade defeated **Chase Owens** & Ricky Morton ... **The Devine Doll** beat **Christopher Stevens** ... **Mike Justice**, Jay Batista, & Chief Jay Eagle defeated Matt Marshall, Pretty Boy Rob, & **Ike Stevens** ... Heavyweight champion **Tim Thomas** beat Mack Truck by DQ.
(01-08-11)

—Brett Wolverton

TENNESSE

CHATTANOOGA—WWE Raw at UTC McKenzie Arena: **Mark Henry** beat **William Regal** ... **The Bella Twins** (**Nikki** & **Brie**) beat **Maryse** & **Alicia Fox** ... **Yoshi Tatsu** beat **Zack Ryder** ... **Tyson Kidd** beat **David Hart Smith** ... Tag team champions **Vladimir Kozlov** & **Santino Marella** beat **Nexus** (**Michael McGillicutty** & **Husky Harris** ... U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** beat **Ted DiBiase Jr.** by submission ... **John Morrison** pinned **Sheamus** in a streetfight ... WWE champion **The Miz** beat **John Cena** and **CM Punk** in a three-way match.
(01-14-11)

—Charles Nilsen

TEXAS

BEAUMONT—WWE Raw at the Ford Arena: **Mark Henry** beat **William Regal** ... **The Bella Twins** (**Nikki** & **Brie**) beat **Maryse** & **Alicia Fox** ... **Yoshi Tatsu** defeated **Zack Ryder** ... **Tyson Kidd** beat **David Hart Smith** ... Tag team champions **Santino Marella** & **Vladimir Kozlov** defeated **Husky Harris** & **Michael McGillicutty** ... U.S. champion **Daniel Bryan** beat **Ted DiBiase** ... **John Morrison** defeated **Sheamus** in a streetfight ... WWE champion **The Miz** beat **CM Punk** and **John Cena** in a triple-threat match.
(01-15-11)

—Rob Peters

WICHITA FALLS—WWE Smackdown at the Kay Yeager Coliseum: **Alberto Del Rio** defeated **R-Truth** ... **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** beat **Tyler Reks** ... **Drew McIntyre** & **Jack Swagger** defeated **JTG** & **Trent Barreta** ... **Percy Watson** vs. **Curt Hawkins** ended in a no-contest ... **Kofi Kingston** defeated **Dolph Ziggler** ... **Cody Rhodes** beat **Chris Masters** ... **Beth Phoenix** & **Natalya** defeated **Layla** & **Rosa Mendes** ... World champion **Edge** defeated **Kane** and **Wade Barrett** in a triple-threat match.
(01-15-11)

—Mark Dunfee

SAN ANTONIO—River City Wrestling at t The Good Shepard Lutheran Church Activity Center: **Ann Dromeda** pinned **Muerte** ... **Girard St. Christopher** defeated **Wallace Gordon** ... Tag team champions **San Antonio's Most Unwanted** (**Joey Spector** & **Nemesis**) beat **Alissa Flash** & **Mercedes Martinez** ... **The Karate Kids** (**JoJo Bravo**, **Darci Drake**, & **Black Belt Jones**) defeated **Team XL** (**Mr. B** & **Ryan Johnston**) & **Rudy Russo** and **The Texas Hitmen** (**Big Dogg** & **Skitzo**) & **Ben Galvan** in a three-way tag team scramble ... Heavyweight champion **Lance Hoyt** pinned **Ray Rowe**.
(01-08-11)

—William L. Hamilton

There were only three wrestlers remaining (four, if you count the hiding Santino Marella) when John Cena was ambushed and eliminated by WWE champion The Miz.

BROWNSVILLE—Rio Grande Valley Wrestling at The Amigo Land Community Center: **Lowrider** pinned **Joey Spector** ... **Black Belt Jones** defeated **JoJo Bravo** ... **Avalanche Tyler** pinned **Skitzo** ... **Big Dogg** beat **Ryan Genesis** ... **Pink** defeated **Darci Drake** ... **Carlito** defeated NWA North American champion **The Sheik** by DQ.
(01-07-11)

—William L. Hamilton

VIRGINIA

MATTAPONI—NWA Fusion at King and Queen Elementary School: **Joseph Brooks** defeated **Logan Hodge** ... **Victor Griff** beat **Ryan Zane** by submission ... **Preston Quinn** & **Larry Horsley** defeated **Da New Bloodz** (**Da Gift** & **Da Curse**) and **Krotch** & **Executioner Gallows** ... **Derrick Von Doom** beat **Brandon Day** ... **A-1** (**Jeff Early** & **Zak Hilton**) beat tag team champions **Geordie Bulldogs** for the title.
(01-15-11)

—Preston Quinn

RICHMOND—Ring of Honor at the Raceway Complex: **Christopher Daniels** pinned **Roderick Strong** ... **Grizzly Redwood** & **Andy Ridge** beat **The Bravado Brothers** ... **Mike Bennett** defeated **Adam Cole** ... **Homicide** defeated **Rhett Titus** ... **Steve Corino** beat **Caleb Konley** ... **Colt Cabana** defeated **Caprice Coleman** ... **Kenny King** defeated **Kyle O'Reilly** ... **Davey Richards**, **Jay & Mark Briscoe**, & **El Generico** defeated Roderick Strong, Christopher Daniels, & **The Kings of Wrestling** (**Claudio Castagnoli** & **Chris Hero**).
(01-14-11)

—Preston Quinn

WISCONSIN

WEST ALLIS—NWA Midwest Brew City Wrestling at Knight of Columbus: **Chase McCoy** pinned **Brian Sager** ... **TW3** & **Justin Dredd** beat **Mason Quinn** & **Derek St. Holmes** ... **Dysfunction** pinned **Beautiful Bobby V** ... Women's champion **Stacy Shadows** pinned **Mystic Sexton** ... **Dave Rydell** beat **Jett Bennett** by submission ... Tag team champions **The Beer City Bruisers** beat **Team Eh!** & **Urban Assault Team** in a steel cage match ... Heavyweight champion **Sadist** defeated **The Sheik** in a steel cage match.
(01-14-11)

—Frank Jendusa

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

VERNON, BC—Thrash Wrestling at Schubert Centre: **Kyle Sebastian** defeated **Marc Anthony** ... **Collin Cutler** defeated **Danny Knightmare** by DQ ... Collin Cutler & **Marty Sugar** defeated **Danny Knightmare** & **Ronnie Angel** ... **Slave** defeated **Wrathchild** by submission ... Heavyweight champion **Michael More** defeated **Black Dragon** in a no-DQ match.
(01-29-11)

—Marty Sugar

ENGLAND

LONDON—TNA at Wembley Arena: X division champion **Kazarian** defeated **Chris Sabin** and **Shannon Moore** in a three-way ... **Matt Morgan**, **Mickie James**, & **Angelina Love** defeated **D'Angelo Dinero**, **Madison Rayne**, & **Tara** in a six-person match ... **Jeff Jarrett** pinned **Johnny Moss** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) defeated **Mark Haskins** & **Magnus** ... **Rob Van Dam** pinned **Matt Hardy** ... **Ric Flair** defeated **Douglas Williams** by submission ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** beat **Jeff Hardy**.
(01-29-11)

—Joey Mills

MANCHESTER—TNA at the Manchester Evening News Arena: **Shannon Moore** defeated **Mark Haskins** ... **Mickie James** beat **Angelina Love** ... X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Chris Sabin** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.**

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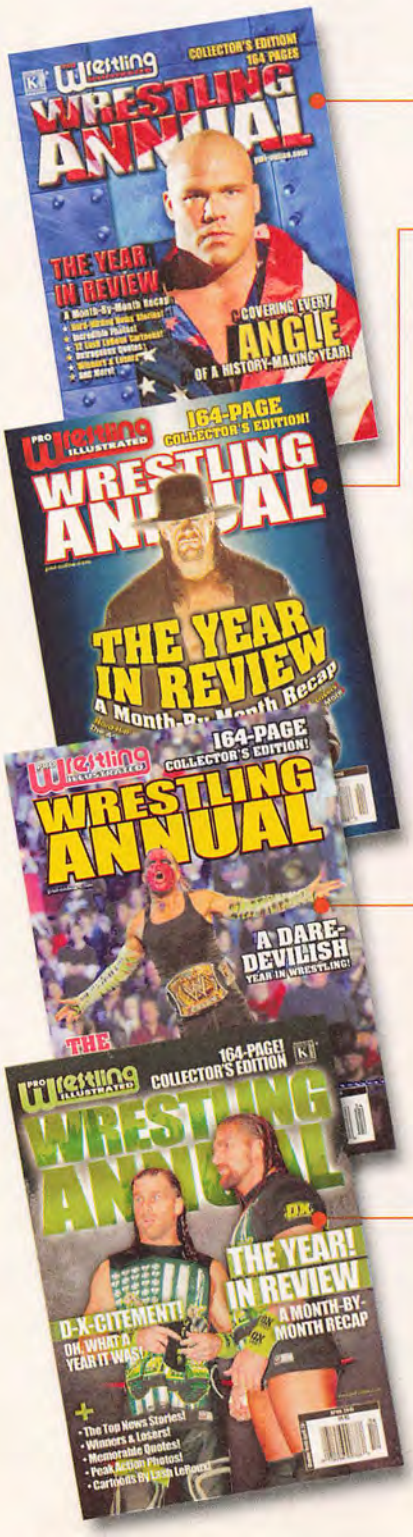

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(**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) beat **The British Invasion** (**Brutus** & **Douglas Williams**) ... **Matt Morgan** & **Rob Terry** beat **Jeff Jarrett** & **D'Angelo Dinero** ... **Mr. Anderson** & **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Matt** & **Jeff Hardy**.
(01-28-11)

—Joey Mills

FRANCE

PARIS—TNA at Le Zenith: X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Chris Sabin** and **Mark Haskins** in a three-way ... **Mickie James** & **Angelina Love** defeated **Madison Rayne** & **Tara** ... **Rob Van Dam** beat **Matt Hardy** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) beat **The British Invasion** (**Brutus Magnus** & **Douglas Williams**) ... **Matt Morgan** & **Shannon Moore** defeated **Jeff Jarrett** & **D'Angelo Dinero**.
(01-22-11)

—Jeremy Lewis

LYON—TNA at Halle Tony Garnier: X division champion **Kazarian** defeated **Chris Sabin** ... **Mickie James** & **Angelina Love** defeated **Madison Rayne** & **Tara** ... **Matt Morgan** defeated **D'Angelo Dinero** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) defeated **The British Invasion** (**Brutus Magnus** & **Douglas Williams**) ... **Matt Hardy** & **Jeff Jarrett** defeated **Shannon Moore** & **Mark Haskins** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** defeated **Jeff Hardy** and **Rob Van Dam** in a three-way.
(01-21-11)

—Jeremy Lewis

GERMANY

BERLIN—TNA at O2 World: X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Chris Sabin**, **Shannon Moore**, and **Mark Haskins** in a fatal four-way ... **Mickie James** & **Angelina Love** beat **Madison Rayne** & **Tara** ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Murat Bosporus** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) beat **The British Invasion** (**Brutus Magnus** & **Douglas Williams**) ... **Matt Morgan** beat **D'Angelo Dinero** ... **Rob Van Dam** & **Mr. Anderson** defeated **Jeff** & **Matt Hardy**.
(01-25-11)

—Jeremy Thomas

IRELAND

DUBLIN—TNA at National Stadium: X division champion **Kazarian** defeated **Chris Sabin** and **Mark Haskins** in a three-way ... **Mickie James** & **Angelina Love** defeated **Madison Rayne** & **Tara** ... **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Matt Hardy** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) defeated **The British Invasion Invasion** (**Brutus Magnus** & **Douglas Williams**)... **Matt Morgan** & **Shannon Moore** defeated **D'Angelo Dinero** & **Jeff Jarrett** ... World champion **Mr. Anderson** beat **Jeff Hardy**.
(01-24-11)

—Steve Cooney

JAPAN

TOKYO—New Japan Pro Wrestling at Korakuen Hall: **Tomoaki Honma** defeated **Kyosuke Mikami** ... **Jushin Liger**, **Koji Kanemoto**, & **Tiger Mask** defeated **Jado**, **Gedo**, & **Tomohiro Ishii** ... **Bad Intentions** (**Giant Bernard** & **Karl Anderson**) & **Tama Tonga** defeated **Manabu Nakanishi**, **Strong Man**, & **King Fale** ... **Shinsuke Nakamura**, **Toru Yano**, & **Takashi Iizuka** defeated **Hiroshi Tenzan**, **Yuji Nagata**, & **Wataru Inoue** ... **Prince Devitt** & **Ryusuke Taguchi** defeated **NOSAWA** (**Rongai** & **Taichi**) ... **No Limit** (**Tetsuya Naito** & **Yujiro Takahashi**) beat **Hiroshi Tanahashi** & **Hirooki Goto** ... **Satoshi Kojima** beat **Togi Makabe**.
(01-30-11)

—John Fox

PUERTO RICO

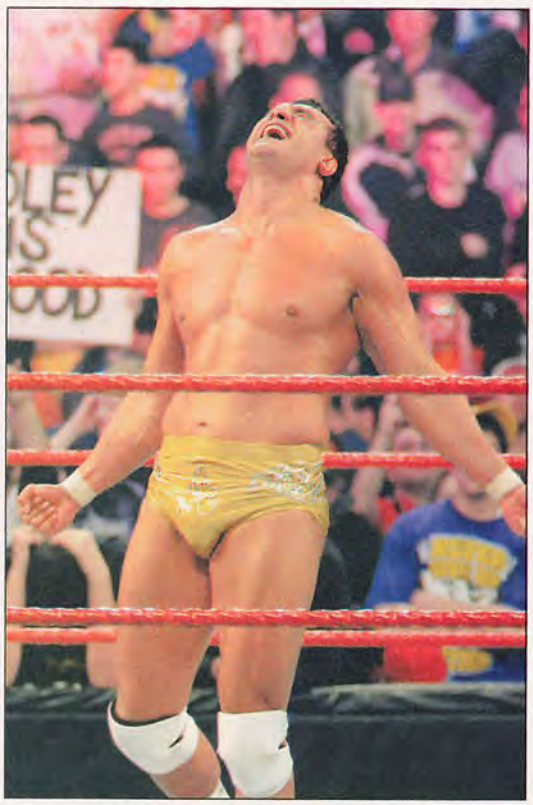
BAYOMON—IWA at Pepin Cestero Arena: XCD champion **Havoc** defeated **Julian Jamrock** by submission ... **Cruzz** pinned **Renegado del Infierno** ... **Bryan** defeated Cruzz ... **Shockwave the Robot** pinned **Samuel Adams** .... Puerto Rico champion **Noel** defeated **Tua** by DQ ... Caribbean champion **Xavant** pinned **Damian** ... **Atomo** & **Sonico** defeated **The Academy** (**Philipps** & **Jamal**) ... Intercontinental champion **Chris Angel** defeated **Savio Vega** in a cage match ... Heavyweight champion **Escobar** defeated **Dennis**.
(01-06-11)

—Mike Lano

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW—TNA at the Braehead Arena: X division champion **Kazarian** beat **Shannon Moore**, **Chris Sabin**, and **Mark Haskins** in a three-way ... **Mickie James** & **Angelina Love** defeated **Madison Rayne** & **Tara** ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Lionheart** ... Tag team champions **Beer Money Inc.** (**James Storm** & **Robert Roode**) defeated **The British Invasion** (**Brutus Magnus** & **Douglas Williams**) ... **Matt Morgan** beat **D'Angelo Dinero** ... **Mr. Anderson** & **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Matt** & **Jeff Hardy**.
(01-27-11)

—Tony Cottam



Del Rio thought that victory was his when he dumped Randy Orton (above left). Once he eliminated the pesky Marella, the Mexican rejoices over the biggest win of his life (above right).

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ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Given the level of cheering Randy Orton had heard over the past year, it was no surprise that our readers voted him both Wrestler of the Year and Most Popular Wrestler of the Year in our 2011 Achievement Awards.

Indeed, "The Viper" won both categories handily, and the fans' ever-growing support for Orton was clearly expressed in the feedback we received.

"2010 wasn't his best year in terms of world titles or wins and losses," wrote Jeff Springfield. "But when I watch WWE, there's no other wrestler I look more forward to seeing than Orton."

Subscriber Beth McArdle writes, "He's smug and arrogant, but there's something about Randy Orton that just makes me want to watch him. His matches always have an edge, like something important or exciting or dangerous is going to happen."

"Orton is like an adult version of John Cena," says reader Randy Paul. "He's somebody fans like me can get behind while Cena plays to the teeny-boppers."

DEL RIO FAN

I cannot figure out why any fan would boo Alberto Del Rio! Here's a handsome guy with charisma that can wrestle well in a variety of styles. What else could anyone ask for in a wrestler?

Sure, his personality can be grating at times, but when you consider how well he's done since coming to WWE, I think he's earned the right to brag a bit. I was so happy to see Del Rio win the Rumble match, and I can't wait to see him win his main event match at WrestleMania against Edge.

KIM BOYLE
Houston, TX

SATISFYING VICTORY

Though I wouldn't call myself a "fan" of Mr. Anderson, I would like to congratulate him on an impressive victory over Jeff Hardy at Genesis.

Few wrestlers have overcome as much adversity as Anderson has, and although there are better wrestlers in TNA right now, it was somewhat satisfying to see him come away with the World title.

GENNIE SORCEWIN
Atlanta, GA

TOTAL RECALL?

Can there be a recall of this year's "*PWI* 500" (October 2010), or at least

Photo by Lee South/TNA Wrestling

Eric Bischoff was just one of the obstacles Mr. Anderson had to overcome on his way to becoming TNA World champion at Genesis. Reader Gennie Sorcewin says that while she's not an Anderson fan, she was happy to see him get the gold.

a reprint of "Harry Burkett's Take" explaining why John Cena deserved the number-one ranking?

I recently ordered a satellite package that enabled me to view all pro wrestling on TV, including TNA programming. AJ Styles certainly reached the very low glass ceiling mentioned in the "500." Upon viewing *TNA Impact*, I watched Eric Bischoff dress down Styles for losing the TV title to Douglas Williams! Also, does Styles wrestle singles matches? If so, I must have missed them.

Styles' listed "Top-Five Moments" are laughable compared to Cena's. Plus, post-"500," Cena was involved in the most interesting 2010 angle (The Nexus). Whether talking or wrestling, Cena *was Raw*.

Tossing a bone to TNA elevated neither the performer nor the promotion. Please consider the monumental failures of "*PWI* 500" number-one AJ Styles in the future.

NATE ROBISON
Mayer, AZ

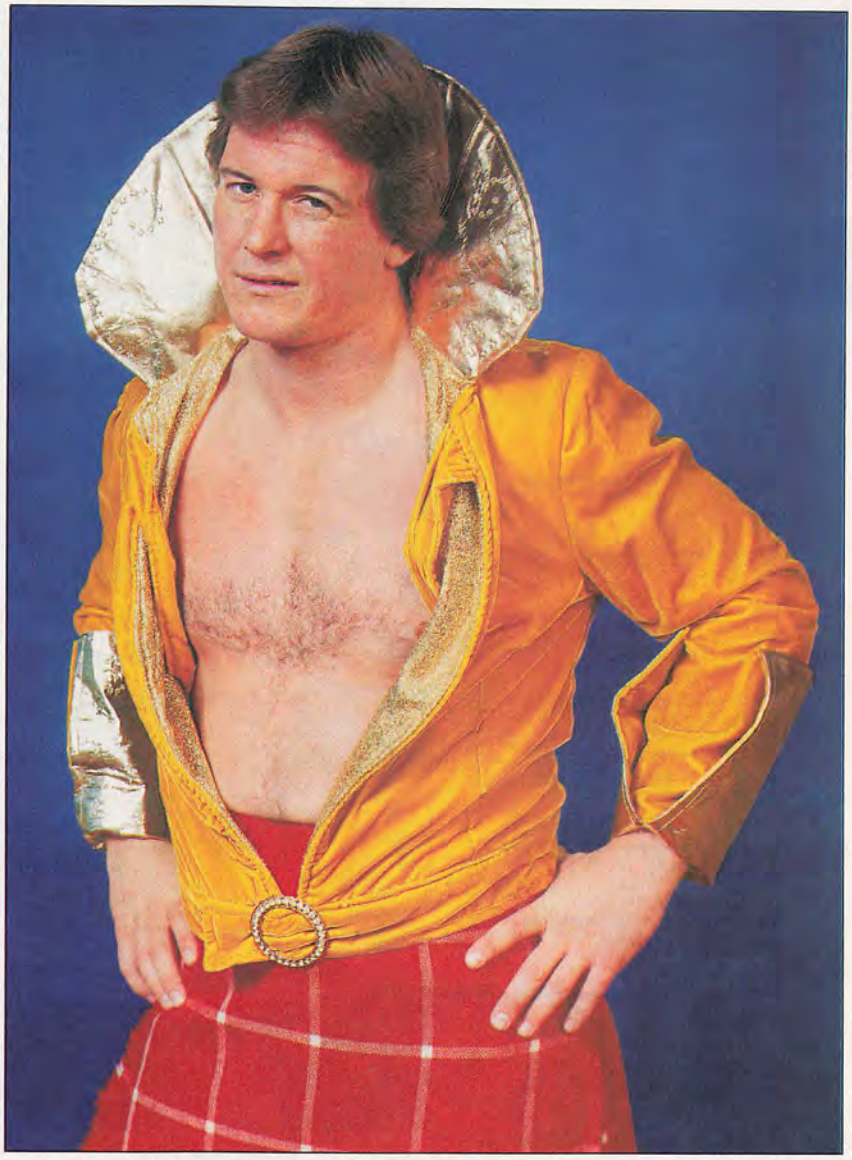
(Editor's note: The singles matches you missed occurred during Styles' seven-month TNA World title reign in 2009-10.)

KINDRED SPIRITS

I was reading the February 2011 edition of *PWI*, and I must say I enjoyed Harry Burkett's article on his wrestling collection. As a fellow wrestling fan, I can relate to Burkett's obsession with wrestling. It's nice to know I'm not the only one who keeps everything that's wrestling-related. From my magazine and video collections to my figures collection, I can really understand Mr. Burkett. I often wonder what will become of my collection when I pass. Hopefully, it will end up in good hands.

So, from one wrestling fan to another, I must say, keep on collecting and enjoy what you love.

JUSTIN WICK
Clintonville, PA



In our March issue, we wrote that Randy Orton was the first wrestler to go from Most Hated wrestler to Most Popular in back-to-back years. However, reader Lonnie Davison correctly points out that Roddy Piper accomplished the same feat back in the mid-'80s.

OLD-SCHOOL READER

As a longtime wrestling fan (34 years old) and one who longs for more traditional stuff, it's still fun to read *PWI* and its sister publications.

I don't need to analyze TV ratings, know about MMA, or get a recap of a show that I saw just five days earlier in the newsletters. I'll take the old school magazines any day. The "Year-End" issue and the "*PWI* 500" are still as fun to read as ever.

GREG CASTERIOTO
Tabernacle, NJ

OOPS ... OUR BAD

Every year, I look forward to picking up the "Year-End" issue. I especially like to see who the fans voted for in different award categories.

One little error, though. In your recap, you stated that no other wrestler had ever gone from Most Hated to Most Popular in a single year. Roddy Piper actually did it in 1985-1986. It even states that in the award history section. Otherwise, I love the magazine. Always a real treat. Keep up the good work.

LONNIE DAVISON
Des Moines, IA

(Editor's note: Nice catch, Lonnie.) □

PWI OFFICIAL RATINGS

FOR PERIOD ENDED FEBRUARY 15, 2011

TOP 10

1. **THE MIZ**
   231, Cleveland, OH
   (3) WWE heavyweight champion
2. **JEFF HARDY**
   225, Cameron, NC
   (2) TNA World champion
3. **EDGE**
   250, Toronto, ON
   (–) WWE World champion
4. **HIROSHI TANAHASHI**
   230, Ogaki, Japan
   (–) IWGP heavyweight champion
5. **RANDY ORTON**
   245, St. Louis, MO
   (4) No. 1 contender WWE title
6. **ALBERTO DEL RIO**
   210, San Luis Potosi, Mexico
   (–) No. 1 contender WWE World title
7. **ADAM PEARCE**
   248, San Diego, CA
   (5) NWA heavyweight champion
8. **RODERICK STRONG**
   215, Tampa, FL
   (7) Ring of Honor heavyweight champion
9. **EL ZORRO**
   200, Durango, Mexico
   (–) AAA champion
10. **MR. ANDERSON**
    243, Green Bay, WI
    (10) No. 1 contender TNA World title

Alberto Del Rio

TAG TEAMS

1. **ROBERT ROODE & JAMES STORM**
   Combined weight: 470 pounds
   (8) TNA World tag team champions
2. **CHRIS HERO & CLAUDIO CASTAGNOLI**
   Combined weight: 475 pounds
   (2) ROH tag team champions
3. **CHARLIE HAAS & SHELTON BENJAMIN**
   Combined weight: 497 pounds
   (–) No. 1 contenders ROH tag team title
4. **CHRIS SABIN & ALEX SHELLEY**
   Combined weight: 420 pounds
   (1) No. 1 contenders TNA World tag team title
5. **SANTINO MARELLA & VLADIMIR KOZLOV**
   Combined weight: 529 pounds
   (–) WWE tag team champions
6. **MASATO YOSHINO & PAC**
   Combined weight: 331 pounds
   (–) DGUSA Open the United Gate champions
7. **JON DAVIS & KORY CHAVIS**
   Combined weight: 449 pounds
   (5) NWA tag team champions
8. **DAMIEN SANDOW & TITUS O'NEILL**
   Combined weight: 504 pounds
   (6) FCW tag team champions
9. **KENNY OMEGA & KOTA IBUSHI**
   Combined weight: 390 pounds
   (7) IWGP junior heavyweight tag team champions
10. **MAX & JEREMY BUCK**
    Combined weight: 350 pounds
    (10) No. 2 contenders TNA World tag team title

RAW

WWE Champion:
THE MIZ
(C) 231, Cleveland, Ohio

1—**RANDY ORTON** *(1) 245, St. Louis, MO*
2—**JOHN CENA** *(–) 240, West Newberry, MA*
3—**CM PUNK** *(–) 222, Chicago, IL*
4—**DANIEL BRYAN** *(3) 190, Aberdeen, WA*
5—**MARK HENRY** *(–) 392, Silsbee, TX*
6—**JOHN MORRISON** *(5) 223, Los Angeles, CA*
7—**SHEAMUS** *(2) 280, Dublin, Ireland*
8—**TED DiBIASE JR.** *(7) 235, West Palm Beach, FL*
9—**SANTINO MARELLA** *(9) 226, Calabria, Italy*
10—**R-TRUTH** *(–) 235, Charlotte, NC*

SMACKDOWN

World Champion:
EDGE
(C) 250, Toronto, ON

1—**ALBERTO DEL RIO** *(3) 210, San Luis Potosi, Mexico*
2—**DOLPH ZIGGLER** *(4) 221, Hollywood, CA*
3—**REY MYSTERIO JR.** *(2) 175, San Diego, CA*
4—**WADE BARRETT** *(–) 265, Manchester, England*
5—**KANE** *(1) 323, Hell*
6—**THE BIG SHOW** *(6) 485, Tampa, FL*
7—**KOFI KINGSTON** *(7) 221, Ghana, West Africa*
8—**DREW McINTYRE** *(5) 252, Ayr, Scotland*
9—**CODY RHODES** *(8) 223, Marietta, GA*
10—**JACK SWAGGER** *(9) 263, Perry, OK*

TNA

World Champion
JEFF HARDY
(C) 225, Cameron, NC

1—**MR. ANDERSON** *(2) 243, Green Bay, WI*
2—**MATT MORGAN** *(1) 310, Fairfield, CT*
3—**HERNANDEZ** *(–) 280, Houston, TX*
4—**ROB VAN DAM** *(5) 237, Los Angeles, CA*
5—**KURT ANGLE** *(3) 240, Pittsburgh, PA*
6—**JEFF JARRETT** *(7) 235, Nashville, TN*
7—**KAZARIAN** *(–) 225, Anaheim, CA*
8—**DOUGLAS WILLIAMS** *(4) 225, Reading, England*
9—**D'ANGELO DINERO** *(9) 230, Harlem, NY*
10—**SAMOA JOE** *(10) 280, American Samoa*

RING OF HONOR

Champion:
RODERICK STRONG
(C) 215, Tampa, FL

1—**DAVEY RICHARDS** *(1) 205, Othello, WA*
2—**CHRISTOPHER DANIELS** *(2) 224, Los Angeles, CA*
3—**JAY BRISCOE** *(–) 215, Laurel, DE*
4—**HOMICIDE** *(3) 205, Brooklyn, NY*
5—**EDDIE EDWARDS** *(6) 214, Boston, MA*
6—**MARK BRISCO** *(–) 215, Laurel, DE*
7—**CLAUDIO CASTAGNOLI** *(5) 265, United Bank of Switz.*
8—**DELIRIOUS** *(–) 189, Edge of Sanity*
9—**CHRIS HERO** *(7) 225, Metropolis*
10—**EL GENERICO** *(–) 180, Tijuana, Mexico*

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (–) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

ALPHA-1 WRESTLING : Champion—Justin Sane; **1**—Brodie Lee; **2**—Josh Alexander; **3**—Ethan Page; **4**—Cheech; **5**—Michael Elgin; **6**—Ashley Sixx; **7**—Joey Kings; **8**—Colin Delaney II; **9**—Colt Cabana; **10**—Matt Cross.

AMERICAN PREMIER WRESTLING: Champion—Jeremy Young; **1**— Scotty Bullwinkle; **2**—Curt Raines; **3**—CUJO; **4**—Lamar Phillips; **5**—David Powers; **6**—Chris Lightning; **7**—TITAN; **8**—High Roller Haize; **9**—Jay Clinton; **10**—Slim Sexy.

DRAGON GATE USA: Champion—YAMATO; **1**—Masato Yoshino; **2**—Austin Aries; **3**—Akira Tozawa; **4**—BxB Hulk; **5**—Naruki Doi; **6**—Brodie Lee; **7**—Jon Moxley; **8**—CIMA; **9**—Ricochet; **10**—PAC.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—MEGA; **1**—Chris Wylde; **2**—Glen Osbourne; **3**—Aden Chambers; **4**—Scott Wright; **5**—Travis Blake; **6**—Bazooka Joe; **7**—Kid America; **8**—Jason Leigh; **9**—Courageous Cruz; **10**—Papadon.

ELITE PRO WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Vincent Vega; **1**—Flex Phenom; **2**—Bodie Williams; **3**—Jason Riggs; **4**—Aidiean; **5**—Griffen; **6**—Leslie Leatherman; **7**—OGB; **8**—Chris Cline; **9**—Sinister Cross; **10**—Draconis Diablo.

EVOLVE: Champion—Vacant; **1**—Jimmy Jacobs; **2**—Johnny Gargano; **3**—Chuck Taylor; **4**—Drake Younger; **5**—Ricochet; **6**—Munenori Sawa; **7**—Sami Callihan; **8**—Chris Lee; **9**—Claudio Castagnoli; **10**—Homicide.

I BELIEVE IN WRESTLING: Champion—Ray Beez; **1**—Q.T. Marshall; **2**—Jerrelle Clark; **3**—Nooie Lee; **4**—Alex Pourteau; **5**—Lince Dorado; **6**—Sean Davis; **7**—Ricky Young; **8**—Santana; **9**—Gus Money; **10**—J.D. Amazing.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Col. Spud Wade; **1**—Ken Steel; **2**—Scott Lee; **3**—Jeff Holland; **4**—Damien James; **5**—Sgt. Jim Nelson; **6**—Eclipso; **7**—Ace Englund; **8**—Devon Mack; **9**—Jamie Wright; **10**—The Dark Dragon.

PLATINUM CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Shane Marx; **1**—Geter; **2**—Mason; **3**—Vordell Walker; **4**—Jay Fury; **5**—The Vandal; **6**—Chip Day; **7**—Pandora; **8**—Sugar Dunkerton; **9**—The Phantom; **10**—Davey Richards.

TENNESSEE XTREME WRESTLING: Champion—Bob O Mac; **1**—Nick Taylor; **2**—Bobby Blassie; **3**—Allen Shepard; **4**—Funkmaster V; **5**—Bobby Rayne; **6**—Shane Daniels; **7**—Tsunami Kid; **8**—J-Mac; **9**—Demetria; **10**—Maskerade.

TEXAS WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—Big Dogg; **1**—Draven; **2**—Total P.I.M.P; **3**—Tha Gangsta; **4**—Lemus II; **5**—Vince Vile; **6**—Ken Johnson; **7**—Galan Ramirez; **8**—Madness; **9**—Kevin Knight; **10**—Desperado.

WOMEN SUPERSTARS UNCENSORED: Champion—Mercedes Martinez; **1**—Serena; **2**—Alicia; **3**—Brittney Savage; **4**—Sassy Stephanie; **5**—Jessicka Havok; **6**—Rain; **7**—Jazz; **8**—Nikki Roxx; **9**—Kristen Astara; **10**—Traci Brooks.

NWA

Champion:
ADAM PEARCE
(C) 248, San Diego, CA

1—THE SHEIK
(1) 265, Tehran, Iran
2—PHILL SHATTER
(2) 247, Paris Island, SC
3—COLT CABANA
(3) 233, Chicago, IL
4—SID SYLUM
(4) 218, Las Vegas, NV
5—AUSTIN ARIES
(–) 202, Milwaukee, WI
6—ANTONIO THOMAS
(6) 235, Panama City, FL
7—OLIVER JOHN
(7) 228, Sacramento, CA
8—JOEY RYAN
(8) 210, Los Angeles, CA
9—CHANCE PROPHET
(9) 225, Sacramento, CA
10—BLUE DEMON JR.
(10) 194, Mexico City, Mexico

JAPAN

1—HIROSHI TANAHASHI
(–) 230, Ogaki, Japan
IWGP heavyweight champion
2—SUWAMA
(3) 260, Kanagawa, Japan
AJPW Triple Crown champion
3—TAKASHI SUGIURA
(2) 220, Nagoya, Japan
GHC heavyweight champion
4—SATOSHI KOJIMA
(1) 250, Tokyo, Japan
5—NAOMICHI MARUFUJI
(–) 190, Saitama, Japan
6—GO SHIOZAKI
(9) 240, Kumamoto, Japan
7—TOGI MAKABE
(–) 240, Sagamihara, Japan
8—SUZUKI KOTARO
(–) 180, Warabi, Japan
9—GIANT BERNARD
(–) 350, Boston, MA
10—YOSHIHIRO TIJIRI
(–) 180, Kumamoto, Japan

MEXICO

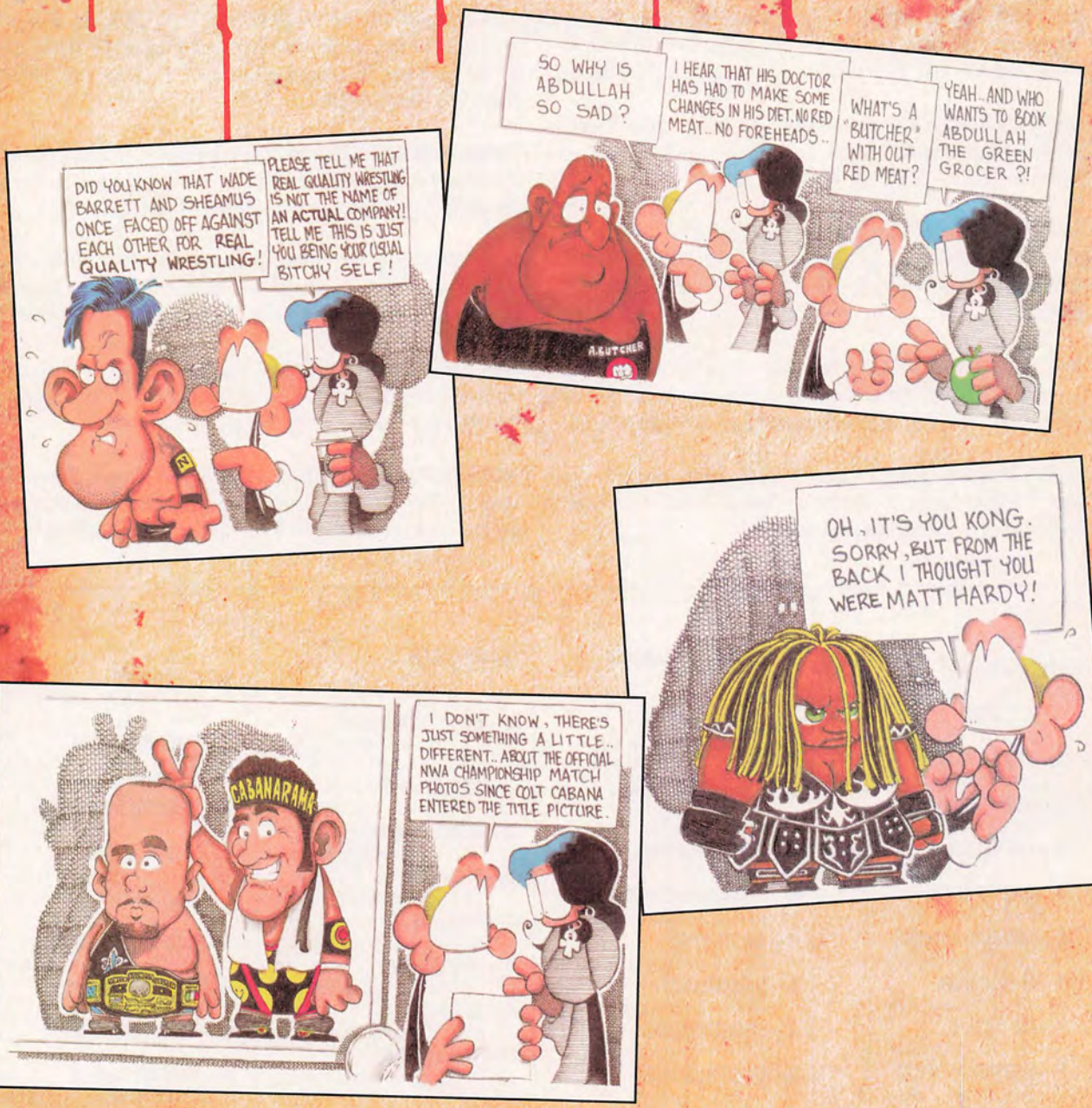
1—EL ZORRO
(2) 200, Sevilla, Spain
AAA champion
2—ULTIMO GUERRERO
(1) 210, Gomez Palacio, Mex.
CMLL champion
3—JUSHIN LIGER
(3) 210, Hiroshima, Japan
4—NEGRO CASAS
(–) 170, Mexico City, Mexico
5—ATLANTIS
(–) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico
6—VOLADOR JR.
(–) 190, Monclova, Mexico
7—LA SOMBRA
(7) 180, Gomez Palacio, Mex.
8—AVERNO
(6) 170, Mexico City, Mexico
9—CHESSMAN
(–) 230, Villa Nicolas Romero, Mexico
10—LA PARKA
(10) 220, Hermosillo, Mexico

WOMEN

1—EVE TORRES
(–) 131, Los Angeles, CA
WWE Divas champion
2—MADISON RAYNE
(2) 115, Seattle, WA
TNA Knockouts champion
3—MERCEDES MARTINEZ
(3) 147, Waterbury, CT
4—MICKIE JAMES
(7) 128, Richmond, VA
5—NATALYA
(1) 135, Calgary, AB
6—MADISON EAGLES
(6) 160, Sydney, Australia
7—ANGELINA LOVE
(9) 118, Toronto, ON
8—BRITTANY FORCE
(5) 130, Johnstown, PA
9—MELANIE CRUISE
(–) 170, Chicago, IL
10—TASHA SIMONE
(8) 156, The Darker Side of Evil

DRAWING BLOOD

BY JASON CONLAN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I HEAR THAT HIS DOCTOR HAS HAD TO MAKE SOME CHANGES IN HIS DIET. NO RED MEAT.. NO FOREHEADS..
WHAT'S A "BUTCHER" WITHOUT RED MEAT?
YEAH.. AND WHO WANTS TO BOOK ABDULLAH THE GREEN GROCER ?!
A BUTCHER
OH, IT'S YOU KONG. SORRY, BUT FROM THE BACK I THOUGHT YOU WERE MATT HARDY!
CABANARAMA
I DON'T KNOW, THERE'S JUST SOMETHING A LITTLE.. DIFFERENT.. ABOUT THE OFFICIAL NWA CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH PHOTOS SINCE COLT CABANA ENTERED THE TITLE PICTURE.

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